MusicWeek October 2023

MusicWeek

October 2023

"I've always fought for my place"

Kylie

How the pop queen conquered a new generation

PLUS!

BELIEVE

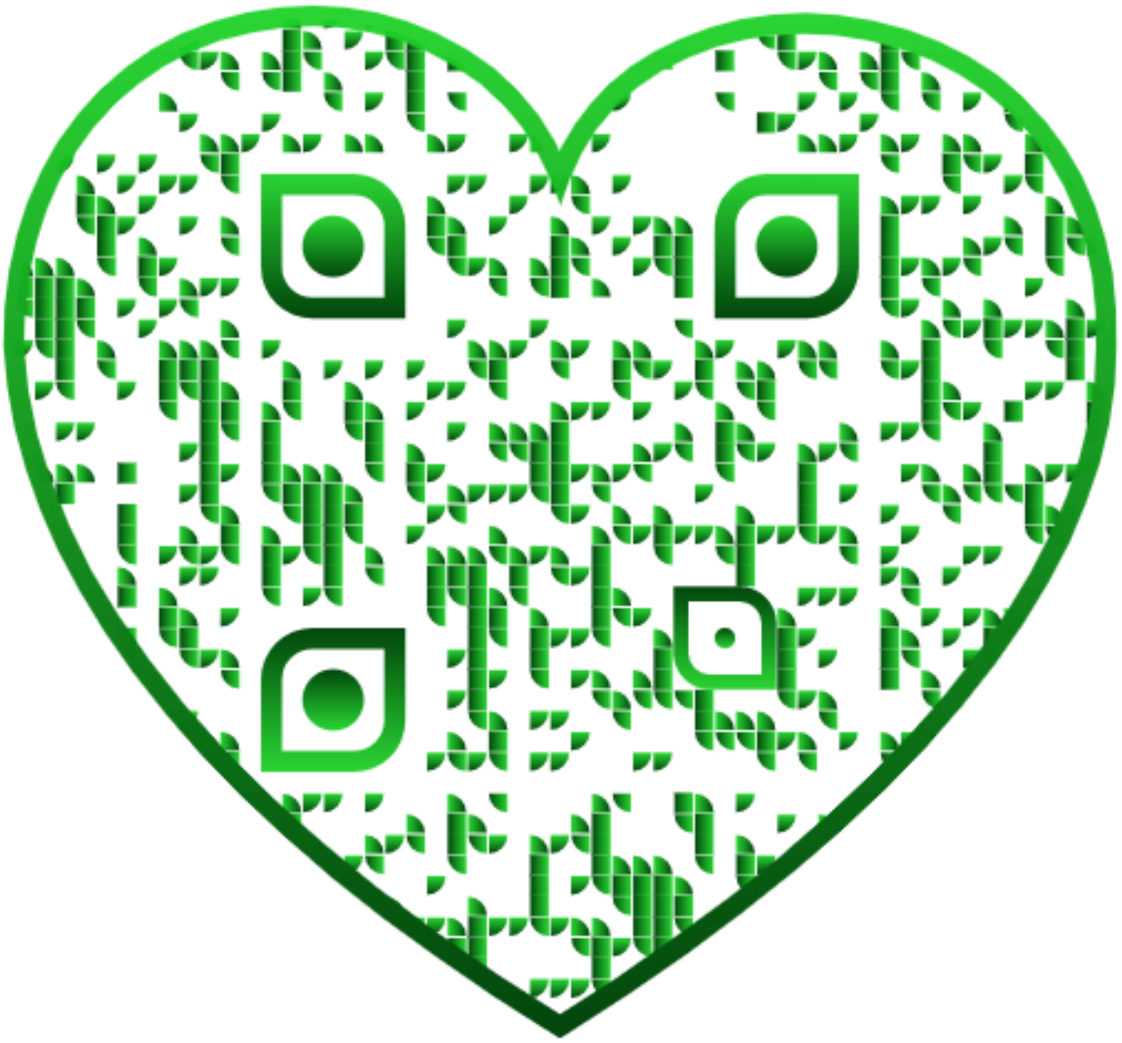
ESEA MUSIC

MUYIWA AWONIYI

MAE STEPHENS

FUTURE
DIGITAL EDITION

Inside the business of music. Established 1959



Kylie

TENSION

THE INCREDIBLE NEW ALBUM FROM
ONE OF POP'S GREATEST ICONS

22 SEPT 23

INCLUDES THE SMASH HIT SINGLES
PADAM PADAM & TENSION

BMG

Kylie

PADAM PADAM

THE POP PHENOMENON OF THE SUMMER

15 WEEKS IN THE UK SINGLES CHART, INCLUDING **4** WEEKS IN **TOP 10**
140+ MILLION GLOBAL STREAMS TO DATE
#1 UK AIRPLAY CHART
#1 BIG TOP **40** FOR **5** WEEKS
US BILLBOARD CHART TOP **40** ENTRY
FIRST TOP **30** US POP RADIO IN **20** YEARS
CERTIFIED GOLD IN AUSTRALIA AND BRAZIL
CERTIFIED SILVER IN THE UK WITH OVER **272K** SINGLE SALES

BMG

Beyond The Music

Changemaking Music Conference & New Music Festival 11–14 Oct 23 Manchester

Featuring

Michael Adex (NQ)
YouTube
BBC Introducing
Sarah Stennett
Karen Gabay (BBC)
Sony Music
Keith Harris OBE
Amazon Music
EMI North
Lucy Powell MP
UK Music
DAACI
Tom Gray (Ivors Academy)
Napster
Bandcamp
Warner Music
Andy Burnham
Faith Newman (Reservoir / Def Jam '87)
Naomi Pohl (Musicians Union)
National Album Day
+ More To Be Announced

New music festival plus special live events available to delegates including:
Free Your Mind exclusive preview at Aviva Studios, home of Factory International.
The Face Rave at a secret location.
Mike Garry And The Cassia String Quartet Album Launch at Halle St Michael's*

Panels

The Last Supper
A dinner you won't want to miss
(no food provided)

Rallying Cry: The Value Of Music

S.O.S: Re Thinking The Economics Of Music

Artists & Revolution
What Should A Modern Music Company Look Like In 2023

The Music Industry's Duty Of Care When It Comes To Mental Health
(in partnership with LUSH)

Rage With The Machines

Who's Feeding the Grassroots? (in partnership with Music Venue Trust)

Beyond Streaming

Green Summit
(in partnership with AIM)

Hip-Hop 50:
Celebrating The Women Behind Hip-Hop

House Of Pain:
Does UK Politics Place Enough Value On Music?

From Black Squares To Where? (in partnership with Black Music Coalition)

Your Human Artistry
(in partnership with BPI)

Creating A UK Parliament For The Music Industry
(in partnership with Musicians Union)

The Mayors' Live Show
(in partnership with LIVE)

The Evolution Of Independent Venues
(in partnership with Independent Venue Week)

Capital Punishment
Does the Future of the Music Business Lie Outside London?

MMF Brunch

BPI Social

*all events subject to availability

The Future Of Music . Be Part Of The Conversation . Tickets & More Info:beyondthemusic.co.uk

factory international · cityco · CO-OPERATIVES UK · MCR BID Manchester City Centre Business Improvement District · GMCA Greater Manchester Combined Authority · Manchester Accommodation BID · Manchester City Council

"You look like fun to me"

EDITORIAL

HEAD OF CONTENT George Garner
george.garner@futurenet.com

DIGITAL EDITOR Andre Paine
andre.paine@futurenet.com

FEATURES EDITOR Ben Homewood
ben.homewood@futurenet.com

CONTENT EDITOR/PRODUCER Miranda Bardsley
miranda.bardsley@futurenet.com

ART EDITOR Steve Newman
steve.newman@futurenet.com

CHARTS & DATA Isabelle Nesmon
isabelle.nesmon@futurenet.com

CONTRIBUTORS
Adenike Adenitire, Sammy Andrews, Koury Angelo, Mark Davyd, Niall Doherty, Anna Fielding, Charlotte Gunn, James Hanley, Paul Harries, Colleen Harris, James Hickie, Alan Jones, Louise Haywood-Schiefer, Emmanuel Legrand, Paul Stokes, Jennyfer J. Walker, Carla Marie Williams, Paul Williams

COMMERCIAL

ADVERTISING SALES DIRECTOR, MUSIC PORTFOLIO
Lara Jaggon
lara.jaggon@futurenet.com

SENIOR EVENT MANAGER Madelene Andersson
madelene.andersson@futurenet.com

SUBSCRIPTION SALES
0208 955 7020

PRODUCTION

B2B PRODUCTION MANAGER Matthew Eglinton
matthew.eglinton@futurenet.com

MANAGEMENT

MANAGING DIRECTOR, MUSIC Stuart Williams

UK CRO Zack Sullivan

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR Clare Dove

HEAD OF PRODUCTION US & UK Mark Constance

GLOBAL HEAD OF DESIGN Rodney Dive

HEAD OF DESIGN (MUSIC) Brad Merrett

GROUP ART DIRECTOR B2B Nicole Cobban

COMMERCIAL FINANCE DIRECTOR Dan Jotcham

INTERNATIONAL

Music Week is available for licensing and syndication. Contact the licensing team to discuss partnership.

HEAD OF PRINT LICENSING Rachel Shaw
licensing@futurenet.com

MusicWeek

121 - 141 Westbourne Terrace, Paddington, London, W2 6JR

Editorial: 0330 390 6751
Advertising: 020 3878 3723
Subscriptions: 0208 955 7020

For any queries with your subscription please contact the number above
Email musicweek@abacusemedia.com

musicweek.com/subscribe

All contents © 2023 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We assume all unsolicited material is for publication unless otherwise stated, and reserve the right to edit, amend, adapt all submissions.

Music Week is a member of the Periodical Publishers' Association ISSN – 0265 1548

FUTURE
Connectors. Creators. Experience Makers.

Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR)
www.futureplc.com

Chief Executive Officer Jon Steinberg
Non-Executive Chairman Richard Huntingford
Chief Financial and Strategy Officer Penny Ladkin-Brand
Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244

Printed by Buxton Press Ltd, Palace Road, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 6AE

Widely Recycled ppa ipso For press freedom with responsibility

Welcome to

Music Week...

Padam the torpedoes!

Welcome to the new issue of *Music Week*, and it's our absolute pleasure to welcome the one and only Kylie Minogue back onto our cover. Spoiler alert: while she can't say for sure what her favourite Kylie song is, in our massive cover feature the superstar and her team at A&P Artist Management, BMG and CAA can give us in-depth insight into the incredible campaign for her new album Tension. It is, assuredly, one of the most extraordinary chapters of her storied career.

With the Padam Padam phenomenon still unfolding – dominating everything from Pride celebrations to TikTok and airplay – Team Kylie has delivered a masterclass in priming a classic artist to reach a whole new generation. Some 35 years after her debut album, she's enjoying a viral moment that many of her peers would kill for. And this is not by chance. Kylie is working overtime to seize new opportunities in the US and online right now.

"I think everyone takes their own lessons or advice from Kylie and her career," offers Polly Bhowmik of A&P Artist Management in our feature. For me, the lesson is Kylie's ability – and, perhaps more importantly, her willingness – to adapt to pop's rapidly changing landscape without ever compromising on who she is. Be it in the studio or out of it, she can set trends, she can absorb them – but the inimitable Kylieness of Kylie is never diluted. She has found a way to be both current and timeless.

A lack of willingness to embrace change is often signposted by people in the music world – typically *off* the record in my experience – as a key gripe with our industry. The question emerges: is the infrastructure of our business anywhere near as adaptive as the artists it supports? Some say we're so far behind the curve in reacting to major developing issues, it's basically a joke at this point.

That said, there have been some impressive moments of Darwinian evolution in the everyday tumult of the music industry recently. A lack of global stars breaking? See Geffen Records and Hybe's joint project to audition 20 contestants from around the world to compete for a place in a new girl group and the obvious inherent potential that has. The threat of AI eroding artists' rights? YouTube has put its cards on the table by publishing its "AI music principles", as well as unveiling the YouTube Music AI Incubator, which will be informed by major artists, songwriters and producers from Universal Music Group. A dearth of British breakthroughs? The BPI's plan to open a 'BRIT School North', which has been approved by the Department For Education, should help address that.

The willingness to change often proves to be a bigger obstacle than the real task at hand. Perhaps we all just need to be a bit more like Kylie in the way we go about things...

George Garner, Head Of Content

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

We would like to advise all of our customers to please log in to your account on musicweek.com and make sure your contact details are correct. We must have your email address, regardless of the subscription option you have, in order to send you the Weekly Digital Chart Packs. If you need additional information please contact customer service at musicweek@abacusemedia.com or +44(0)20 8955 7020

musicweeknews @musicweek musicweekinsta

Contents

FRONT SECTION

08 THE BIG STORY
Roblox's head of music Karibi Dagogo-Jack talks breaking artists and connecting with Gen Z fans

10 SONOS
Sonos executive Ryan Myers takes us inside the firm's latest innovations and streaming partnerships

13 FOR THE RECORD/ TAKE A BOW

15 SPOTLIGHT
Mushroom Group's Madeleine O'Gorman on representing the Australian giant in the UK

16 START ME UP/ IN POD WE TRUST
We meet Karta's founders Erik Londré and Tony Barnes in Start Me Up, whilst our podcast of the month is Tom Hollings and Jamie Osman's They Think It's All Sober series

17 DIGITAL DISCOURSE
Sammy Andrews weighs up the pros and cons of AI's rapid development

18 TWEETS OF THE MONTH

19 RISING STAR
We meet Anushka Gantumur – executive, creative, Europe at BMI

20 ON THE RADAR
Mae Stephens opens up about mental health and her viral breakout hit

22 PLAYLIST/ TASTEMAKERS

23 MAKING WAVES/ SYNC STORY

24 KEY RELEASES
A look at all the biggest albums coming your way very soon

25 INCOMING
Star of stage and screen Billy Porter tells us about his first pop record since 1997

26 HOTSHOTS

FEATURES

28 KYLIE MINOGUE
For our very special cover feature, the pop icon goes deep on her new album Tension, starting her first Vegas residency and being an essential part of the UK's cultural fabric. Plus: there's campaign insight from A&P Artist Management, BMG and CAA!

KYLIE MINOGUE

PHOTOS: EMI, Shutterstock/Global, Louise Haywood-Schiefer, Kenneth Liew, Steve Schofield

36 ALEX KENNEDY
Believe UK's managing director reflects on his beginnings in the music industry and offers up his ambitions to expand the independent company

44 MUYIWA AWONIYI
Tems' co-manager and creator of the star-studded Insights conference talks working with the RCA/Since '93-signed artist and the boom in African music

50 ESEA MUSIC
Hiroki Shirasuka and Tiger Hagino Reid outline their mission to support the UK's East & Southeast Asian music community

56 INDEPENDENT RETAIL SPOTLIGHT
We bring together key industry players from the retail business to hear their insights into what it's *really* like to run a record shop in 2023

61 ROYALTIES
In a special report, leading executives hold court on the vital and developing sector

REGULARS

42 MENTOR ME
Award-winning production and songwriting duo Nova Wav serve up their top five career tips

67 CENTRE STAGE
MVT CEO Mark Davyd highlights the importance of supporting the grassroots sector to sustain the industry's live music ecosystem

68 HITMAKERS
Producer and musician Carter Lang reveals the story behind lyrical genius SZA's viral smash Kill Bill

71 CHARTS
An in-depth look at this month's biggest movers and shakers

88 ARCHIVE
We take a look through the pages of the music business of yesteryear

90 AFTERSHOW
Operatic star Alfie Boe looks back on the inspiration behind his new record and duetting with Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder

THE BIG STORY

Building 'Blox: Gaming platform Roblox opens up huge audience for artist discovery

Head of music Karibi Dagogo-Jack reveals how labels are embracing the growing opportunity to connect music with millions of Gen Z players

— BY ANDRE PAINE —

Roblox's head of music partnerships, Karibi Dagogo-Jack, has outlined the platform's potential to break artists and songs.

In recent years, Roblox has become a key destination for artists entering the metaverse, with high-profile avatar performances by David Guetta, Bebe Rexha and Lil Nas X.

Just over a year on from his appointment, LA-based Dagogo-Jack has spoken to *Music Week* about Roblox's strategy for music and its industry relationships, including licensing arrangements.

"We encourage everyone to think about Roblox as a space where they can connect directly to their fans," said the former Spotify exec. "Sixty-six million people come to Roblox every day, they spend almost two-and-a-half hours on Roblox – it's a really deeply engaged space."

Given the reach of the gaming platform, Dagogo-Jack is confident that it will become a launchpad for new music.

"We're seeing labels thinking about how they can use Roblox to break songs," he said. "I'm expecting that, in the very near future, we'll see a song or artist generate their initial flight trajectory from Roblox. We are very invested in that becoming a reality. We're seeing more forward thinking and more innovative experiments around that work."

Although it has formed long-term partnerships with major labels and BMG, Roblox has previously run into legal issues. In 2021, it settled a copyright infringement lawsuit with the National Music Publishers Association (NMPA).

The developer has struck some deals for comprehensive music licensing for its audio library for game creators, including EDM label Monstercat. It also has agreements with some performance rights organisations. On the whole, though, Roblox continues to license music directly based on specific activations.

"It's still dependent on the artist and label, we ask them to clear anything they want to bring on to the platform," said Dagogo-Jack.

"It can be a bit of a hurdle," he added. "We've seen that the master [recording owner] and publisher can be at odds sometimes about how they want music to proliferate. It does sometimes create a bit of friction between the record label and publisher. But we've had so many music activations over the course of my time at the company, so it's not insurmountable."

Prior to leaving his role as Spotify head of music business development, Dagogo-Jack was closely involved in the roll-out of Spotify Island. It was the first interactive presence on Roblox by a DSP brand and has since had 34m visits.

"Spotify keeps a close eye on where audiences are shifting," said Dagogo-Jack. "They were noticing more and more that Gen Z audiences are spending time on these really deep, rich engagement platforms, whether that's TikTok, Roblox or gaming in general."

Alongside avatar performances, activations include listening and watch parties, as well as permanent social hubs.

The platform is now drawing more established acts with the aim of introducing their catalogue to a new generation, including Metallica, Mariah Carey and Imagine Dragons, who launched the first ever documentary watch party on Roblox.

Working with Universal Music Group, Rocket Entertainment and community creators, Elton John also established an ambitious artist experience.

"Music discovery is one of the biggest benefits and attributes of Roblox as a platform," said Dagogo-Jack. "You're dealing with Gen Z fans, and I try to tell record labels, artists and music brands to think about this as a lifetime value play. Very often the fans that you make between the ages of 13 to 25 end up being eternal artist attachments.

"Music discovery is about the brand new artists but it can also be an artist that is brand new to you. So for a 13-year-old, Elton John and his sterling catalogue *is* music discovery."

To mark his farewell tour, Elton John Presents: Beyond The Yellow Brick Road featured a virtual Roblox performance. In total, there have been more than 2.5m visitors to the interactive hub, which includes a digital fashion collection with virtual merchandise.

"There were Roblox avatars on stage and the merch created was really cool – a lot of the animations and emotes were some of the best sellers [in the Avatar Shop]," added Dagogo-Jack. "It was a very thoughtful, well-developed experience."

The latest hub to launch is Blackpink The Palace, which allows fans to socialise, access exclusive content, visit spaces inspired by music video scenes, and try out digital outfits and choreography.

It follows K-pop act Twice's Roblox activation, which had more than 53m visitors – the platform's biggest music brand experience.

"K-pop is such an interesting amalgam of fandom and music, it feels like that's a sweet spot for Roblox," said Dagogo-Jack.

Labels are now staffing up with team members who can oversee artist experiences on the platform.

"Major labels, more and more, are having Roblox experts or teams emerge in their digital marketing departments, who we speak to every day," said Dagogo-Jack.

The music industry focus for the company is now driving discovery and fandom for artists and labels at all levels.

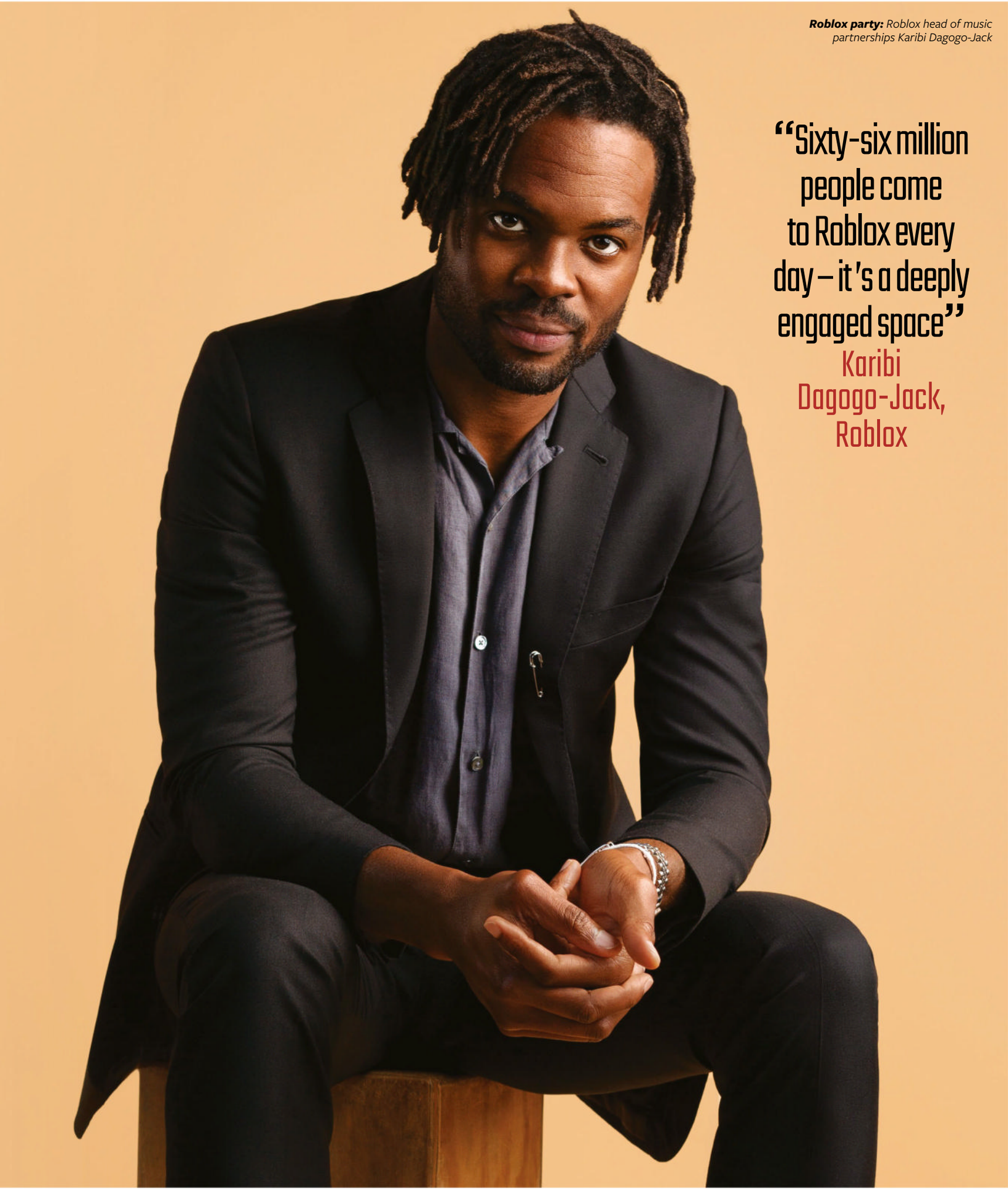
"We started off with these huge concerts, that's how we made a splash," he said. "[But] those are multi-month experiences and relatively higher cost than some of the other things that you can do.

"There's a much lower cost for creating individual merch and putting that into our avatar marketplace. Avatar items are one of the number one ways for people to express themselves on Roblox."

While high-profile avatar performances remain a key element of their industry engagement, Dagogo-Jack suggested that other event types and new approaches are potentially "more innovative and more exciting to labels and artists".

As Roblox evolves with new opportunities for music, he is confident that more artists will establish permanent social hubs to build connections and increase engagement with fans.

"Roblox is built on community and connection," Dagogo-Jack told *Music Week*. "People think of us as a gaming platform, whereas I think of us as a next-generation social medium. It is just a natural environment for that fandom and those connections to happen."



Roblox party: *Roblox head of music partnerships Karibi Dagogo-Jack*

> "Sixty-six million people come to Roblox every day – it's a deeply engaged space"
>
> Karibi Dagogo-Jack, Roblox

PHOTO: Roblox

DIGITAL

Spatial awareness: How Sonos is powering the spatial audio boom

As DSPs embrace high-quality audio, Sonos exec Ryan Myers opens up about the tech firm's latest smart speakers and a new phase of the streaming revolution

BY ANDRE PAINE

PHOTOS: From The Basement/Sonos

Top brass: *Sons Of Kemet performing as part of From The Basement and (below) the Sonos Era 300, which is enabled for spatial audio*

Sonos executive Ryan Myers has spoken to *Music Week* about their increasing engagement with artists and the company's key role in spatial audio.

Sonos launched its Era 300 speaker earlier this year which it says delivers the "best experience for out loud spatial audio with Dolby Atmos".

In March, the company became Apple Music's first partner to bring spatial audio to the home across the Era 300, Arc, and Beam (Gen 2) speakers.

"Spatial audio is fast becoming a primary format for premium sound amongst leading artists, producers and engineers," said Myers, senior director and general manager, Sonos Radio. "We're always watching and engaging with all the developing trends in music and technology, and building them into our products when we feel there's a real benefit to the listener."

Myers said that spatial audio is an "immersive three-dimensional experience that aims to mimic the way we perceive sound in the real world."

Sonos users can also listen in spatial audio and Ultra HD via Amazon Music Unlimited.

Myers said that its partnerships can deliver "continued collaboration and innovations that deliver against the promise of this format".

Spatial audio will be crucial for the sales growth of Sonos' smart speakers. During a tough economic period, it has been facing similar challenges to other tech firms, prompting it to cut 7% of the workforce.

Sonos increased its global reach to 14 million households last year. It has more than 100 streaming content partners for its products.

With reports that Spotify is finally preparing to roll out a high-quality audio option, Spotify HiFi, later this year, that could open up opportunities for Sonos with the 'audiophile' audience. Spotify is already a long-term streaming partner.

Speaking on Spotify's Q2 earnings call, CEO Daniel Ek said: "HiFi remains something that we think has value, but it's something that has value probably more [to the] aficionados in the streaming market. We're interested, obviously, in how we could use that as one tool, in the future, to increase our value even further."

"When Sonos was founded in 2002, the streaming companies we know and love today didn't exist, and now in 2023 music streaming has reached critical mass, with a healthy, competitive ecosystem of innovative music services," noted Myers.

Dolby reported that 87% of artists in the 2022 US Top 100 Albums released music in Dolby Atmos.

Since its arrival in 2021, the number of monthly spatial audio listeners on Apple Music has more than tripled, with 80% of worldwide subscribers accessing the service. Monthly plays in spatial audio have grown by over 1,000%, according to Apple.

A group of producers and studio engineers provide input on product development at Sonos.

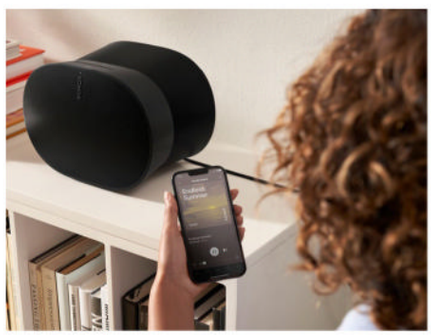
> *"We want to deliver music to listeners in the most authentic way possible"*
> **Ryan Myers**
> **Sonos**

The company employs Giles Martin as its vice president of sound experience.

"Sonos has a long history of working closely with the music community," said Myers. "This group helps us to ensure the products we produce represent sound that's true to the artist's intent. We want to deliver music in the most honest, authentic way possible to our listeners."

As well as following consumer trends in streaming, Sonos has built partnerships with the artist community through Sonos Radio HD.

Launched in 2020, the internet radio service features themed channels and, for £7.99 a month, access to exclusive stations and content from artists including The Chemical Brothers, Thom Yorke, Björk, FKA Twigs, Michael Kiwanuka, Tiwa Savage, Lorde and many more.



"Since launch, we've seen explosive growth [for Sonos Radio]," Myers told *Music Week*. "Original content continues to be a fan favourite with listening hours nearly doubling over the last year."

To further expand the reach, Sonos signed a deal earlier this year for Deezer to power the curated radio service in 16 countries.

Myers said the partnership will "improve the overall listening experience for our customers".

"The collaboration aligns with Deezer's strategy of focusing on partnership-led expansion to deliver growth opportunities in the US and other markets globally," he added.

Sonos Radio teamed with producer Nigel Godrich to air new audio episodes and archive from his live music show From The Basement, featuring performances by Sons Of Kemet, Idles, Warpaint, Squid, Caribou and Nilüfer Yanya.

Its most ambitious partnership to date has been with legendary artist and producer Brian Eno, who launched The Lighthouse station in 2021 to air both an extensive archive of unreleased work and new material. It features hundreds of previously unheard tracks from across his 50-year career.

"His curated station offers a rare insight into Eno's creative genius and his work creating, producing and redefining music," said Myers. "The Lighthouse is a great example of how we can bring exclusive music content to fans."

As well as expanding the range of genres on the platform, Myers stressed that Sonos Radio HD is focused on "upholding artistic integrity and fairly compensating creators for their work."

"We're always working to expand our content selection, building on the iconic artist collaborations to date," he added.

MUSIC WEEK

INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR

Phrased Differently would like to thank our amazing team and our incredible writers. We have been so humbled by all the wonderful industry support including Music Week and PRS. Thank you for recognising our success.

PHRASED DIFFERENTLY

A Budemusic COMPANY

#RaisedByPhrased

COMMUNITY

LEGACY

NETWORK

BLACK MUSIC COALITION

EST 2020

YOU CALLED WE ANSWERED

BMC MEMBERSHIP IS NOW OPEN

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- **ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL & SOCIAL EVENTS**
- **A RANGE OF DISCOUNTED SERVICES**
- **BEING A VALUED PART OF A GROWING COLLECTIVE VOICE FOR BLACK MUSIC STAFF AND EXECUTIVES**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP STARTS FROM £25

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

WWW.BLACKMUSICCOALITION.CO.UK

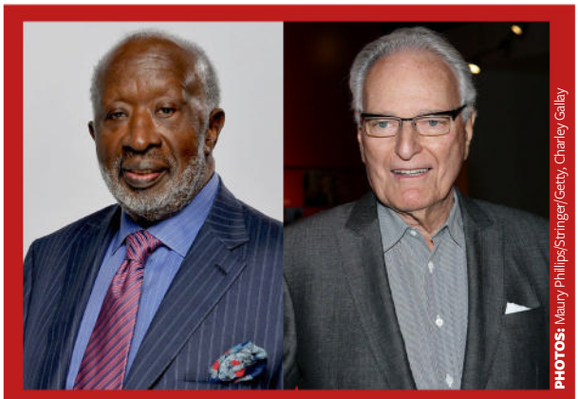
FOR THE RECORD

THE BIG DEAL

Bastille have signed a new deal with EMI Records, which was recently named Record Company winner at the Music Week Awards 2023. EMI co-presidents Rebecca Allen & Jo Charrington said: "Labels are built around exceptional artists, so we couldn't be prouder about this next chapter with Bastille. The band have already had a long and successful career as part of the label, but our ambition is as strong as it's ever been, and our focus is firmly on ensuring their artistry continues to reach new audiences around the world."

THE BIG MOVE

UK Music chief executive Jamie Njoku-Goodwin is to become the Prime Minister's director of strategy. Njoku-Goodwin joined UK Music in September 2020 as CEO and helped steer the sector through the Covid-19 pandemic. "The UK music industry is one of this country's great national assets, and it's been a privilege to represent it for the past three years," he said. "I wish UK Music every success for the future, and hope policymakers continue to give it the support it needs and deserves."



PHOTOS: Maury Phillips/Stringer/Getty, Charley Gallay

THE BIG TRIBUTES

Tributes have been paid to industry figures in the US and UK.

Clarence Avant (*pictured, left*), known as the Godfather Of Black Music, died aged 92 at home in Los Angeles last month.

"Clarence leaves behind a loving family and a sea of friends and associates that have changed the world and will continue to change the world for generations to come," said a family statement.

Avant launched labels Sussex and Tabu, whose rosters included Bill Withers, the SOS Band and Dennis Coffey. He became Motown chairman in 1993 and served on the international board for PolyGram, the first African-American to do so.

UMG CEO & chairman Sir Lucian Grainge paid tribute to both Clarence Avant and Jerry Moss (*pictured, right*), who died, aged 88. Moss formed A&M with Herb Albert in 1962. The label released music by Cat Stevens, Janet Jackson and The Police, among others.

Tributes have also been paid to Dianne Bonney, who died at 39 after a period of illness. Bonney worked at Absolute Label Services, who said: "We are devastated by the loss of a truly vibrant person".

The broadcast sector is mourning the loss of Jazz FM and Scala presenter Jamie Crick, who died aged 57, following a short illness.

"Jamie Crick was a broadcaster through and through and played an integral role on our radio stations," said a spokesperson.

Singer and songwriter Faye Fantarrow has passed away aged 21 after battling a rare brain tumour. The Sunderland-born emerging artist worked with Dave Stewart, who said: "I am so sorry the world only got to witness Faye's genius for such a short time."

THE BIG CHANGE

YouTube has published a first ever set of AI music principles and unveiled the YouTube Music AI Incubator, launching with artists, songwriters and producers from Universal Music Group. UMG CEO & chairman Sir Lucian Grainge – who helped shape the principles – shared his vision for an artist-centric approach to generative AI in a guest YouTube blog. "If we strike the right balance, I believe AI will amplify human imagination and enrich musical creativity in extraordinary new ways," he wrote.

THE BIG RESULT

The Worldwide Independent Network (WIN) annual report shows that the sector accounts for 40% of global market share. It is also responsible for 80% of the world's new releases. Zena White, COO Partisan Records, USA & chair of WIN, said: "WIN's purpose is to develop a thriving ecosystem for independent music businesses worldwide, which ultimately leads to more economic options for artists, in turn allowing for more diversity and progress for music as an art form."

Victory
Chart Position: No.1
Label: Polydor

TAKE A BOW

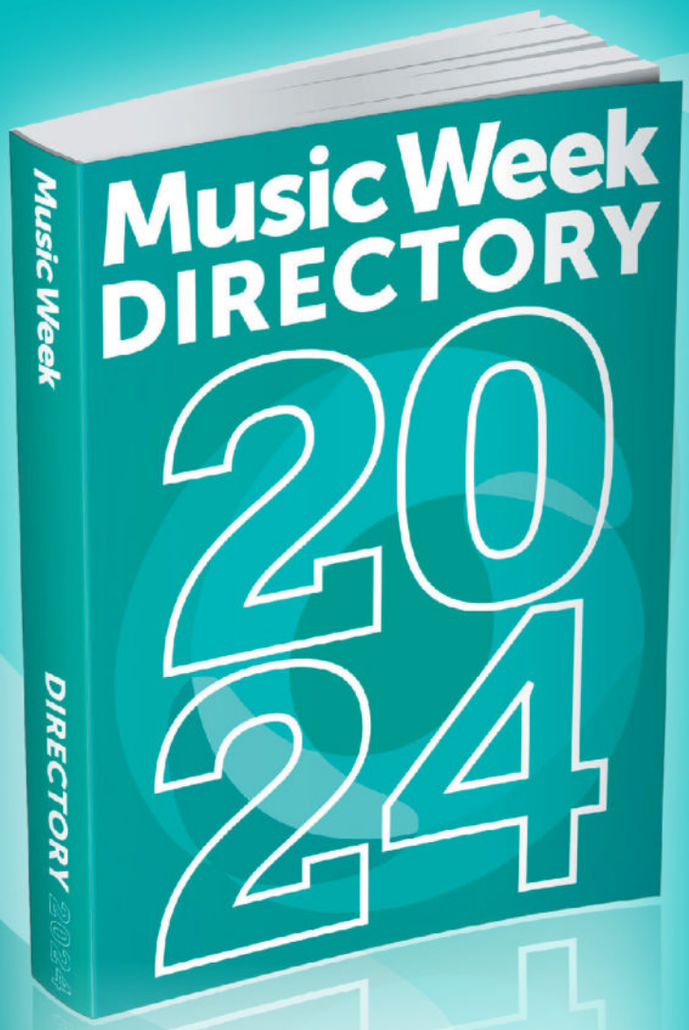
TEAM Cian Ducrot

Management: Victoria De Juniac
Content Creation: Nathan Daly
Marketing: Helen Fleming (Polydor)
Digital Marketing: Fred Stuart (Polydor)
A&R: Hollie Boston (Polydor)
Creative: Emily Jeffery (Polydor)
Formatting: Will Wells (Polydor)
Sales: Ray Primett (Polydor)
D2C: Jack Hardman (Polydor)
Streaming: Will Rowe-Parr (Polydor)
Visual Streaming: Ajani Caro (Polydor)
CRM Strategy: Chloe Sintim (Polydor)
National Radio: Laurence Pinkus (Polydor)
Regional Radio: Gavin Hughes (Fanatic PR)
National Press: Kat Bawden (Dedikated PR)
TV: Claire Stacey (Polydor)
Social Agency: Tallulah Fry/ Hannah Tyler (CYOA)
Creator Strategy: Dulcie MacKechnie (Polydor)

Victory lap: *Cian Ducrot*

Music Week DIRECTORY 2024

THE COMPLETE WHO'S WHO OF THE UK MUSIC INDUSTRY



GET IN NOW!

Contact **Jacob Holmes** at Fellows Media:
jacob.holmes@fellowsmedia.com | 01242 259244

SPOTLIGHT

SHINING A LIGHT ON MUSIC'S BIGGEST NAMES

Madeleine O'Gorman, GM, UK/Europe, Mushroom Group

"We've got such a rich legacy, because Michael Gudinski always put the artist first"

MADELEINE O'GORMAN, MUSHROOM GROUP

Mushroom Group's **Madeleine O'Gorman** moved from Melbourne to London earlier this year to take on the role of UK/Europe general manager for the Australian company's labels. Here, she talks new signings, Aussie exports and the legacy of founder **Michael Gudinski**...

What are Mushroom's ambitions in the UK?
"Mushroom is such an iconic institution, so we've got pretty big global aspirations to expand the label's presence. The partnership [formed in 2022] with Virgin Music Group means we've got access to their label services globally. Being at the core an independent brand, but having that Virgin infrastructure that we can tap into and activate in different markets, is just really thrilling for us. We've already seen success early in the partnership with artists such as DMA's, whose recent album debuted at No.3."

You recently signed Pendulum via the London office. Can you outline the approach to building the roster in the UK?
"When we do sign new artists, it's important to us that they share our global ambitions, work hard and just have a really clear vision of who they are. We've got such a rich catalogue and roster of artists out of Australia, but now that we're on the ground here we're definitely on the lookout for [UK and international] artists. I'm working with the legendary Korda Marshall [international director], who is iconic in the music scene over here and brings such a wealth of knowledge in the A&R space."

How important is it being on the ground here to develop Australian talent in new markets?
"I don't take lightly the fact that I am their voice over here. We had Mia Wray and The Rubens play The Great Escape, and to see so many heavy hitters in the audience from different parts of the industry was just great. I saw Pendulum play at Download Festival and that crowd was just huge. Seeing that immediate connection with UK audiences and watching those crowds go wild was incredible."

For Australian acts looking to break through in the UK, what's the key advice?
"A big part of my role is to give artists that more international lens, and find ways to bridge that gap between audiences across territories. I feel like it's just a really great community over here, and also the live music industry is alive and kicking. For Australian artists, there is just a bit of extra drive to sharpen up your live performance, be as tight as possible and work really hard. It's that work ethic you've got to have to break through internationally."

Are Australian music exports – and is touring – picking up following the pandemic?
"I come from Melbourne, which was one of the most locked down cities in the world. For artists, I get a sense that everyone is still making up for lost time at the moment. There is definitely a pretty strong appetite to just get out there, get on the road, get touring. I know a lot of Australian artists, in particular, have been coming overseas, touring and applying for grants – doing as much as possible just to bridge that gap and make up for lost time."

What are the plans for Mushroom's 50th anniversary celebrations this year?
"We've announced a series of iconic Mushroom songs that are being recorded as covers by other Mushroom artists, and that will continue throughout the year. There's also an all-star concert in November. In August, we released a documentary on [Mushroom founder] Michael Gudinski called Ego. Just watching the trailer, you can feel the energy of Michael. I really feel that has permeated through Mushroom Group, everyone is driven to keep going."

Looking back, how did Michael Gudinski influence your career in the music industry?
"I had always wanted to work at Mushroom because of Michael and how revered he was in the Australian music industry. I feel very lucky that I did have that opportunity. There was a really contagious energy, and it all came down to putting the artist first. That's why he was so loved by the staff and artists. We've got such a rich legacy because of that, but at the same time it's a very forward-thinking company. On the label front, it's about being able to expand internationally and find opportunities on a larger scale. We're an ambitious lot, so it's an exciting time for the group."

WORDS: Andre Paine **PHOTO:** Mushroom Group

START ME UP

THE NEW COMPANIES DRIVING MUSIC'S FUTURE

Fortnite vision: *(L-R) Erik Londré & Tony Barnes*

NAME: KARTA
TECH: METAVERSE STUDIO

The metaverse is a booming area of the business, which means that artists and labels need experts to help navigate these new frontiers.

Karta, which launched in 2021, is one of the metaverse studios pioneering in-game experiences.

The company has just launched its own Fortnite studio to partner with rights-holders from music, entertainment and sport, in turn opening up new revenue streams.

"We started with nothing more than a vision of the future really – that virtual worlds were to become increasingly important to all aspects of human culture, commerce and social life," says CEO Erik Londré. "Now this is a reality, anyone that needs to reach as many young people as possible is going to need a company like Karta."

"Virtual worlds are now increasingly important"
ERIK LONDRÉ, KARTA

Karta now has 21 full-time staff and works with some of the world's biggest artists and brands.

In the last two years, they have delivered a number of projects on Roblox, Fortnite and Decentraland for the likes of Amazon Music, Unilever's Sunsilk and most recently K-pop group Blackpink. Collectively, the Karta campaigns featuring virtual experiences have reached more than 100 million young people.

Co-founder Tony Barnes has held senior digital roles at Virgin EMI and Hipgnosis, as well as chairing the 2020 BRITs Digital Committee.

"I have always been focused on youth culture and connecting artists and music to new audiences using platforms and technology, so the transition feels familiar but refreshing at the same time," he says.

Barnes' background helps when it comes to understanding what artists need from a metaverse campaign, as well as areas such as licensing.

"Our entire team will immerse themselves in the story and journey of an artist to help ensure we deliver a concept and strategy that is completely aligned with them and their audience," he explains.

Karta has raised $1.1m from figures across music, gaming, sport and finance, including Amy Thomson, artist manager and former senior Hipgnosis exec.

"The funding we've secured allows us to be more agile in our operations, including hiring new talent and expanding on to new platforms and regions," Londré tells *Music Week*.

IN POD WE TRUST

INSIDE THE BEST MUSIC PODCASTS

THIS MONTH: THEY THINK IT'S ALL SOBER

Hosted by: Jamie Osman & Tom Hollings
Contact: Theythinkitsallsober@gmail.com

Why was it important to you personally to address the challenges of getting sober in the music industry via a podcast?
Jamie Osman: "Tom and I met when we were 17 and have since gone on very different journeys. With that, at times, can come exceedingly blurred lines between the social, business and party aspects of the job. We re-connected online over our initial journeys of sobriety and then met at a festival in July of 2022 and decided it would be great to talk more openly about our positive experiences. I hate to use the word 'glamourised', but it certainly feels accepted in the business to use alcohol and drugs as a means to celebrate, distract or forget many elements of the industry while also being the cornerstone of many meetings or introductions. We had seen such beautiful benefits [of sobriety] and thought we would talk very openly about it and see where it led us."

"We wanted to have an honest conversation about our own experiences getting sober"
Tom Hollings

There are lots of music podcasts out there, why is yours unique?
Tom Hollings: "Having listened to a lot [of dialogue around] sobriety, we felt that there wasn't much literature around the 'every person' who may be drinking too much but not realise or think that they are. Both Jamie and I are grateful we never had to go into AA or a recovery programme, we definitely felt our habits were exceedingly unhealthy but equally socially accepted and/or celebrated in this business – being the 'party guy' is almost a badge of honour. There aren't any podcasts or platforms discussing how easy it is to drink three or four times a week, or pick up gear so easily in modern society and the creative industries, without it feeling preachy. We just wanted to have an honest conversation about our own experiences and, seemingly, have found a huge amount of people who identified with what we were discussing and how we are feeling, which in itself is wonderful."

Can you talk about a few of the guests you've had on so far and some of the highlights from your discussions?
JO: "We've loved having both Røry and Robert Harvey (The Music, The Streets, Kasabian) on the podcast. Both have very different journeys but both were incredibly inspiring. At the end of each episode we ask each guest to write a letter to their drunk self from their sober self and we have had some absolutely beautifully moving responses. We loved hearing Røry talking about moving to Amsterdam and getting sober, I mean what a place to embrace sobriety!"

Sobering thoughts: *(L-R) Tom Hollings and Jamie Osman with Millie Gooch of Sober Girl Society (centre)*

Finally, what is your advice to people who are struggling with alcohol/substance abuse?
TH: "Take each day as it comes. Both life and work can have overwhelming amounts of pressure. Find good people around you and perhaps identify those who don't allow you to focus on bettering yourself and re-evaluate your relationships with them. Nine times out of 10, a true friend will understand and support you through sobriety. Trust us when we say, it will be the single best thing you ever do in your life. If you think you have alcohol/drug dependency, please consult your GP before going cold turkey. You can also visit: helpmusicians.org.uk, alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk, and musicsupport.org/what-we-do."

DIGITAL DISCOURSE

Deviate Digital CEO Sammy Andrews guides you through the ever-changing tech world...

THIS MONTH:

THE AI OF THE STORM

I've covered AI many times here over the years. However, with debates and innovations continuously ramping up across the business, as well as the UK government looking more closely at potential legislation, I thought it might be a good time to examine some of the issues, as well as the innovations, in what is now an incredibly prevalent technology in many sectors.

In so many of the creative industries, AI has without a doubt opened the door for anyone to generate just about anything, and you need to trust me when I say that we are only at the very start of what is possible.

While some wider AI potential is absolutely terrifying (I'm mainly referring to weapons and political interference here), I'm genuinely excited to see how artificial intelligence develops over the coming years in other industries, including ours.

However, my optimism is indeed still measured by knowing that our business is incredibly bad at agreeing on anything and that mixed messages going to the UK government right now could, once again, be our downfall.

Outside of productivity, marketing and the abundant benefits of aiding creativity with co-creation and assistive creation, there are various interesting and pressing subjects going forward in relation to AI in the music industry.

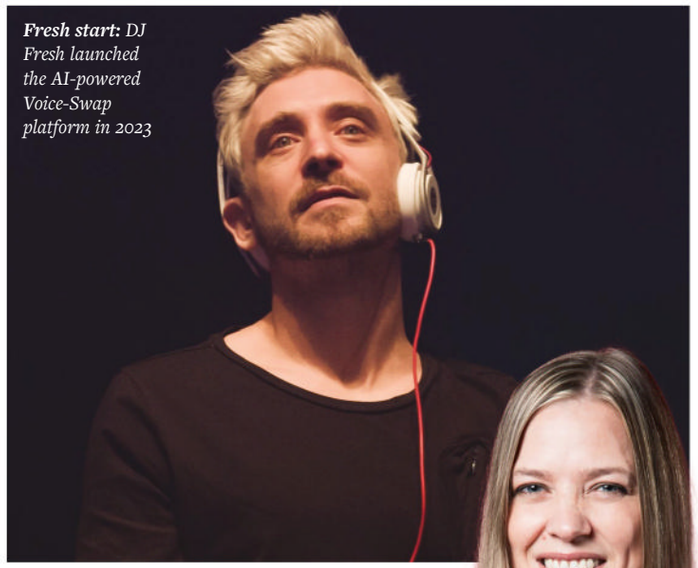
These subjects include: the future market gatekeepers, the future of copyright, the licensing and records being kept of the works that are used, identifiers and labelling of human versus AI-generated tracks. Then there is also the responsibility and accountability that DSPs hold on hosting deep fakes, the policing and monetisation of deep fakes, creators having a choice about whether their works can be ingested for learning (that ship might have sailed in some places, but absolutely must be addressed going forward), crediting in any and all forms, likeness legalities, monetisation and, finally, current and future consumption routes and usages.

Using AI-generated works for background music across various media types has always made a great deal of sense – and has existed in primitive non-AI forms for years – but the industry can easily imagine the potential losses which are at risk when the bigger fish across films, games, television (and any other sync revenue you can name) are replaced. It is happening already and is only going to grow.

Furthermore, we are not the only creative industry that is concerned about this. One particular part of the recent actors' strikes included protesters asking for protection against their scanned likenesses being manipulated by AI without adequate compensation.

Writers are also increasingly concerned about the market being flooded with AI stories and scripts. Indeed, back in February, one of the most respected publishers of science fiction short stories, Clarkesworld, halted applications after being overwhelmed by AI submissions.

Then you've got AI versions of every artist popping up all over the place – which are, let's be honest, really rather sonically impressive.



Fresh start: *DJ Fresh launched the AI-powered Voice-Swap platform in 2023*

"I can't help but feel that the music business is forever caught unprepared with regard to new tech"

SAMMY ANDREWS
DEVIATE DIGITAL

These versions usually have hilarious AI names, but in the majority of cases they do not have any approval from anyone, and artists are currently, on the whole, neither credited nor paid [by AI platforms] for their voice, likeness or personality usage.

The AI music video platform Beatly popped up momentarily to host deep fakes, and claimed to do so without fear of legal reprisal, but the site has been throwing 451 errors for a long time now. When I messaged the creator, Alexander Zwerner, who is a student at Washington University in St Louis, he confirmed to me that the Recording Industry Association Of America (RIAA) forced his hosting platform to shut down the site.

And whilst DSPs have all scrambled to recognise and take down AI deep fakes, it's worth noting that a quick search online will throw up thousands of them across various well-known video platforms, with advertisement revenue turned on.

On the other hand, you've also got products like Voice-Swap, founded by multi-platinum artist and tech founder Dan Stein, aka DJ Fresh.

Voice-Swap, who work with law firm Clintons, claims to offer an SAAS platform for artists to monetise and license their AI voices with the protection of waivers, licences and watermarking.

Voice-Swap says that it offers 50% gross revenue share on its subscription model and 80% of licensing deals on AI vocals. They say they signed up 3,000 voice-swappers in two weeks when they launched.

It is clear that the industry and the government has no agreed policy to deal with all of this just yet, and I can't help feel that the music business is forever caught unprepared with regard to new, and not always *that* new, tech.

The horses have bolted yet again, and despite the bigger music entities being involved in AI for many years already, the industry has somehow, once again, failed to get protections or agreed guidelines in place to deal with it ahead of time.

There are important conversations happening at the moment, but it will take an aligned industry to create a way through that works. And alignment is not something we, as a business, are very good at, given that everyone tends to sit firmly on their own side of the fence in the middle of a drought, desperately trying to water their own garden.

Ah, the music business, you have to love it. What a time to be alive, eh?

PHOTOS: Paul Harries, Joseph Okpako/WireImage, Getty

TWEETS OF THE MONTH

@KanyaKing Great to see @MusicWeek's 50 Years Of Hip-Hop September issue, celebrating the albums that changed the world ***(Kanya King, MOBO) Thursday, August 10***

@Skepta Stopped putting tobacco in my spliffs and I think it's making me tweet more smh ***(Skepta, artist) Saturday, August 19***

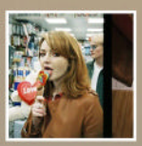
@UMO If you're not having one of the worst years of your life this year I don't trust you ***(Unknown Mortal Orchestra, artist) Thursday, August 17***

@jjiszatt Yessss PLEASE get Big Ange Postecoglu on the @BBCR1 brekkie show!!!!! ***(Jess Iszatt, BBC Radio 1) Tuesday, August 29***

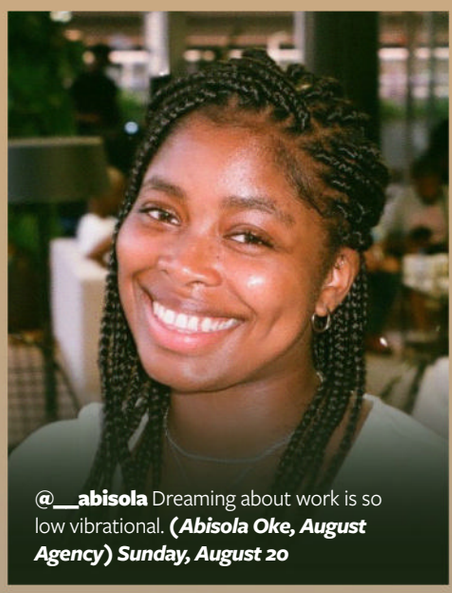
@ddavidrenshaw The bit when Aphex Twin morphed his face into Sir Captain Tom and then into Gregg Wallace was the best bit of the Aphex Twin set at Field Day and maybe 2023 in total. ***(David Renshaw, journalist) Sunday, August 20***

@burnaboy #ITOLDTHEM I HAD TO SHOW THEM WHAT THE REASON IS ***(Burna Boy, artist) Friday, August 25***

@ShauniCaballero It's my birthday and today is all about ME!!! My main character syndrome is on 100% I'm blocking everyone who hits me up about work today. I only care about myself and tequila today ***(Shauni Caballero, Sony Music Publishing) Thursday, August 24***



@hannahlouisef Confession time: just this second realised that AJLT is short for And Just Like That (Sex And The City reboot) and people have not in fact been talking about ALT-J (English indie rock band) ***(Hannah Farrington, blogger/writer) Saturday, August 19***



@__abisola Dreaming about work is so low vibrational. ***(Abisola Oke, August Agency) Sunday, August 20***

@YesTomas Just walked through a set of ticket barriers next to a man shouting 'seek assistance' repeatedly, while angrily pointing at said barriers as if they could hear him. London is breaking people like never before ***(Tomas Fraser, Warner Music) Thursday, August 3***

@missvanspronsen I don't know who needs to hear this, but if you are in a band and are playing gigs/festivals make sure you post about them to encourage sales. Meta paid marketing is pretty much dead and promoters can't access your Spotify data, so make sure you are doing your bit organically ***(Stephanie Van Spronsen, Baroness Music) Thursday, August 24***

@townsendyesmate I get to the office at 6.30am mostly. I'm up anyway because of the gym & I'm more focused after so I end up getting loads done. It also means that when everyone comes in at 9.30 I can spend the rest of the morning chatting shit in the most distracting & unproductive way possible. ***(Mike Townsend, ADA) Tuesday, August 29***

@NaomiPohl There are many demons we're exorcising from the music industry... Harassment, abuse, a mental health crisis, alcohol/drug abuse, bad deals, low pay. Music will be better for it. Treat people well and they will perform better. Let's dismantle the 'myth'. ***(Naomi Pohl, The Musicians' Union) Tuesday, August 29***

@iamcoxhead Jamal Edwards would have been 33 today. Same age as me. Still doesn't feel real that he's not here. Miss you legend ***(Thomas Coxhead, Defected Records) Thursday, August 24***

@Raye If you like and care about music at all, put some respect on Victoria Monét's name. Such a hardworking beautiful talented artist!!! And a joke of a songwriter, have u seen the music videos? Like come onnnn this is an artisttt ***(Raye, artist) Saturday, August 26***

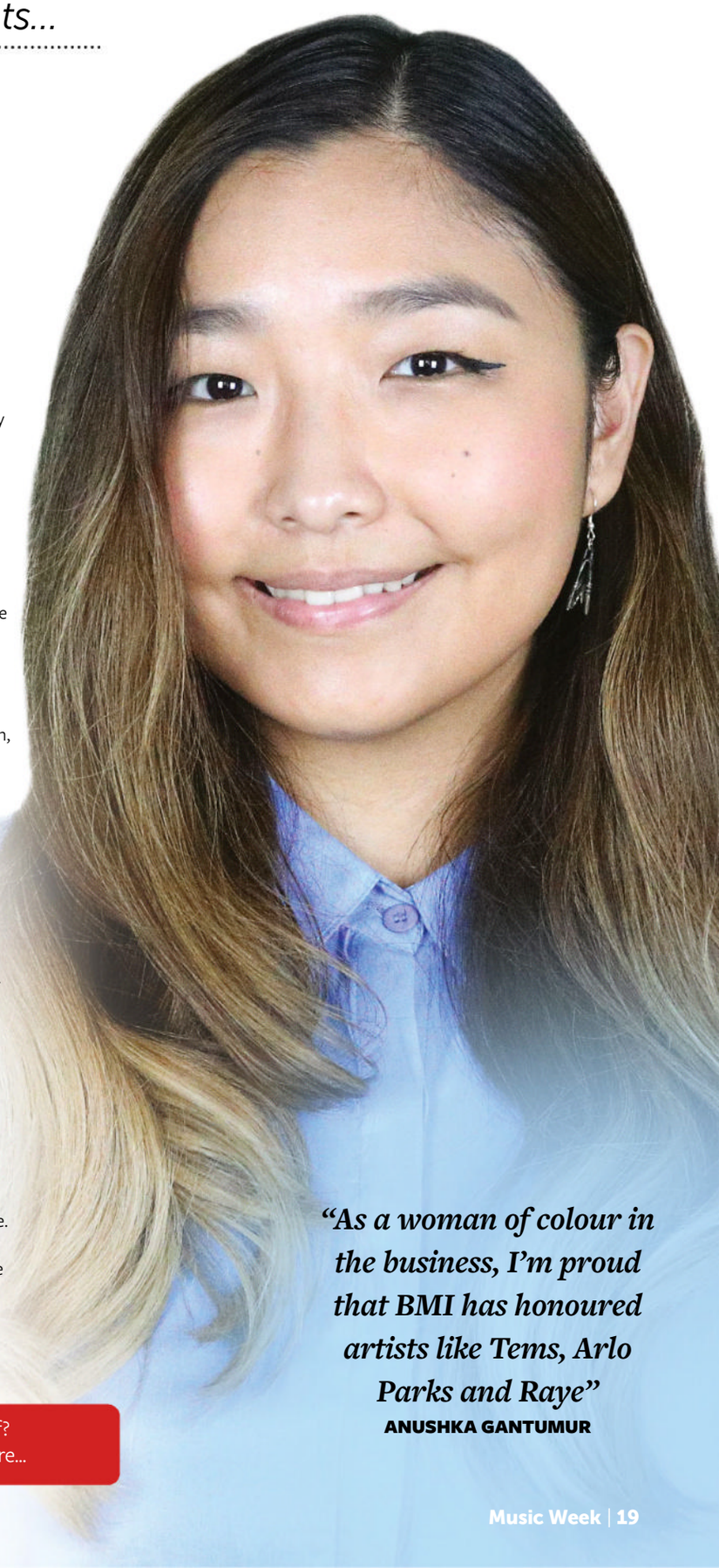
#1 TWEET

RISING STAR

Meet the industry's brightest new talents...

Anushka Gantumur

Executive, creative, Europe, BMI
@anushkagee



How did you land your role at BMI?
"Luck and hard work. I was always passionate about music, but when I was younger the music industry didn't seem like a career path that existed unless you were a musician, so I studied international relations. I was inspired by my mother's diplomatic work showcasing Mongolian artists in Europe so I focused my thesis on the way countries influence the world through promoting their culture, and during my final year studying I found a BMI internship, which was a great way for me to get my foot in the door. I've found that the key to succeeding in this area is persistence in learning, relationship building and dedication."

You were part of the team behind the BMI Impact Award, which was first won by Raye in 2019. Can you talk us through the process of creating it?
"The BMI Impact Award was created to recognise artists who have impacted the industry through their groundbreaking artistry, and we felt there was a need to celebrate songwriters, musicians, artists and producers who were not only commercially successful, but also pushing the boundaries of songwriting or production. We also felt a need for more recognition of diversity and inclusion, and as a woman of colour in the business, I'm so proud that we've honoured artists like Tems, Arlo Parks and Raye with the award."

What does your usual work day look like?
"It consists of meetings, calls and creative work. Most of my time is spent on administration, like song registrations, royalty discrepancies, working with our US teams and talking to new writers and producers. It's not always glamorous, but it's one of the most important parts of the industry because those we work with rely on what we do to make a living. I've also spearheaded events such as Speed Dating For Songwriters, BMI 101 presentations, sponsoring writing camps and I've pitched BMI affiliates for opportunities with bespoke partnerships and performances at Lollapalooza, SXSW and more."

You've signed and developed artists including Joel Corry, Omah Lay, Dylan, Zak Abel and more. Is there one artist signing you are most proud of?
"I'm proud of everyone I've signed, but I'm most proud of the relationships I've maintained. During lockdown, I made a point to reach out directly to many who had to sign up online to connect with BMI, and I've since established incredible connections with Tems, Amaarae, Libianca, Asake and Fireboy DML, to name a few. Our roster of Asian women like Beabadoobee and Rina Sawayama are also killing it at the moment!"

Finally, you have worked extensively with producers and companies working with Afrobeats artists. In your opinion, what has been key to the genre's growth around the world? And how do you see it developing in the future?
"Growing up in London, I was exposed to amazing music, so I knew it was a long time coming for Afrobeats, Afro-pop, Afro-fusion and Amapiano to explode in the way they have. The key to Afrobeats' growth is a combination of factors including social media and the increasing popularity of African culture. Afrobeats is full of life and it resonates with people all over the world, so I believe its future is bright, especially given that the Grammys have added it as a 2024 category. I'm excited to see how it evolves in years to come."

Recommended track: Tyla & Ayra Starr – Girl Next Door

PHOTO: BMI

"As a woman of colour in the business, I'm proud that BMI has honoured artists like Tems, Arlo Parks and Raye"
ANUSHKA GANTUMUR

ARE YOU A RISING STAR? Under 30? Making a name for yourself? Email Miranda Bardsley at miranda.bardsley@futurenet.com to appear here...

MAE STEPHENS

*Thanks to her viral single **If We Ever Broke Up**, **Mae Stephens** is enjoying a stellar 2023, but the road to success has not been easy. Music Week meets **EMI**'s pop prospect to talk mental health, hits and heartache...*

When *Music Week* meets Mae Stephens, she has just two days before she releases Mr Right into the world. We should point out that the singer is not in the business of creating laboratory-perfect men – Mr Right is her brand new single, a collaboration with Meghan Trainor released through EMI. It tells the story of a disappointing app date (*"To the left you go, to the left you go/Goin' home tonight, still lookin' for Mr Right"*) and has the pop bounce and cheeky swagger fans would expect from both singers. For Mae Stephens, it solidifies her role as Gen Z's most relatable new pop star.

"Everyone has one of those dates where they come home and go, 'Oh my God, why did I just do that?' says Stephens, sitting on a blush-coloured sofa in her label's media room. "It's nice to kind of take the mick out of that a little bit. Because you've got to have a laugh about it."

The Kettering-born singer's own worst dates have included visiting an ice rink with someone who turned out to be an expert skater and abandoned Stephens, leaving her holding on to a plastic penguin and "concentrating on not falling over". Then there was the Nando's incident.

"I am a corn on the cob girl," she says. "I think I put him off by eating corn on the cob like an absolute psychopath."

These days Stephens, who is 20, is in a happy relationship. But her breakout hit, If We Ever Broke Up, was conceived in that same spirit of having to laugh about misfortune in love. Having posted the track in the final days of last year, she woke up on New Year's Day 2023 with a hangover and a phone full of notifications.

A clip of the song, featuring the lyrics '*If we ever broke up/I'd never be sad*', had gone viral. You can still hear it on TikTok clips today (the sound has six billion views, while Stephens has 8.6 million likes and almost 350,000 followers), but its reach went way beyond the video platform.

The hit, which spent 11 weeks in the UK Top 20, peaked at No.13 and has 313,714 sales to date according to the Official Charts Company, has now been streamed over 350 million times. The video, meanwhile, has more than 10m views on YouTube. On Spotify, where Stephens has 10m monthly listeners, she was the first UK developing artist to debut in the Global Spotify Chart on launch in over two years.

All of which makes the fact that If We Ever Broke Up nearly didn't surface at all even more remarkable.

"Funnily enough, it was the last video I was going to post," says Stephens. "If it didn't work I was going to get on with my year, do something else... In some ways, going viral like that was quite terrifying because it was a lot of exposure very, very fast. It's something I wanted for a long time, but it was also something that I was quite scared by, because people can come up with some crazy stuff."

Now though, Stephens has come to terms with the seismic impact of going viral.

"TikTok is such an incredible platform," she says. "I'm sitting here with a publishing deal and a record deal, I've had a song in the charts, I've got another one with a major artist who is the absolute queen and it's all because of TikTok."

Stephens is clearly very happy at EMI, where she is part of a new wave of talent including Mercury Prize nominee Olivia Dean, Mae Muller and Bellah Mae. When asked how she feels about co-presidents Rebecca Allen and Jo Charrington heading up the label, she raises her bejewelled hands together in praise.

"There were a lot of things I could have gone for, but I chose EMI because I love the team," she says. "They were on it in terms of mental health and they could also make my crazy ideas a reality."

The consideration given to mental health is important to Stephens, who hopes she can use her platform for good in that area. The experience of being bullied at school has played a significant role in her life.

"I am a massive advocate for anti-bullying measures," she says.

From the age of 12, she was targeted for being too loud, for the shape of her body, for her interest in music. When classmates found her YouTube channel, they used it as further ammunition.

"They would put my videos on the big screens when we had substitute teachers and take the piss out of me," she recalls. "There was a point when I almost quit music. I was on the edge of a knife, I had severe depression and I had thoughts of leaving. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for my brother, or the other people around me who told me to keep going."

By 'here', Stephens doesn't mean sitting in her record company offices talking about the release of her second single, she means the very fact that she's alive and well and smiling.

"I would have made a choice at 16 and I wouldn't have seen myself realise a dream," she says. "I wouldn't have my career. I wouldn't have the partner I'm with now. I want kids to understand that, if you're going through a crap time, you should hold on to what you enjoy, what you're good at."

These days, Mae Stephens gets to be the cool girl she wanted to be at the age of 12.

"Which probably explains my extreme love of Hello Kitty!" she smiles.

Her style and approach is unashamedly feminine. Which, in an era of Taylor Swift domination, the Greta Gerwig-directed Barbie movie and the mass adoption of "girlie" as an affectionate form of address, is no bad thing.

"I am a 20-year-old woman, I pay my bills, I pay my taxes," she says. "But I do feel that femininity, girlishness, is prominent these days. Pink dresses, dainty chains and dainty outfits. Girls deserve to feel pretty and that can take any form they want it to, whether that's showing skin, being covered from head to toe, or wearing pink."

Right now, Mae Stephens is having a ball. Before we leave her, she confides that she's happy with her real-life Mr Right.

"My boyfriend is very supportive and he's been with me since this all kicked off," she says. "So I'm very lucky. I have a very good group of people around me and a very supportive family who are willing to champion anything and everything I do. I'm very lucky to have that." **ANNA FIELDING**

In the UK, Samaritans can be contacted on 116 123 or by email via jo@samaritans.org.

ESSENTIAL INFO

RELEASES: Mr Right (out now)
LABEL: EMI
MANAGEMENT: Claudia Piazza
WHAT THE TEAM SAY:

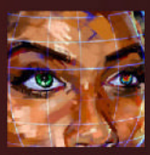
Jo Charrington, co-president, EMI: "We are absolutely delighted that Mae and her music are already receiving global attention following the release of If We Ever Broke Up. Her follow up, Mr Right with Meghan Trainor, further showcases her unique artist proposition and we are equally excited by the new music she has been writing and recording this year. Mae knows exactly who she is as an artist, understands who her fans are, and we, along with her management team, are committed to ensuring she is the biggest breakthrough artist of 2023."

PHOTO: EMI

"I want kids to understand, if you're going through a bad time, hold on to what you're good at"

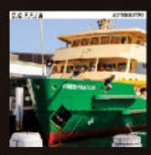
Mae Stephens

THE PLAYLIST



DAVE & TIAKOLA
Meridian **(Dave Neighbourhood)**
Dave's latest collab sees him link up with French rapper Tiakola for two tracks, Meridian and Special. The former is a melodic affair in which the Streatham MC manages to indulge his singing voice, try out some French and reference both King Charles and Kylian Mbappé.
Contact: Carl Fysh
carl.fysh@s-414.com

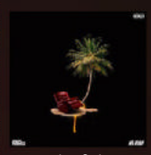
MADISON BEER
Spinnin' **(Epic)**
Inspired by The Beach Boys and Lana Del Rey, among others, Madison Beer's second album Silence Between Songs could be an outlier among her pop peers. Slow, stately and with a gut-punching chorus, Spinnin' imagines what might happen if the earth stopped turning on its axis.
Contact: Kate Head
kate@stokedpr.com



COFFIN
Factory Man **(Bad Vibrations)**
To be blunt, Coffin are awesome. Want proof? Look no further than Factory Man, from their fifth full-length Australia Stops. It is a prime example of their relentless brand of heavy punk rock, gruffly anchored by impressively mulleted drummer and vocalist Ben Portnoy.
Contact: James Sherry
james@divisionpromotions.com

MITSKI
Star **(Dead Oceans)**
Music needs more artists like Mitski, who, seven albums in, is equally at home supporting Harry Styles in stadiums as she is releasing tracks as absorbingly strange as Star, which combines a droning instrumental and delicate vocals to beguiling effect.
Contact: Jon Lawrence
jon@chalkpressagency.co.uk

SVALBARD
How To Swim Down **(Nuclear Blast)**
The third single from Svalbard's fourth record The Weight Of The Mask is perhaps the metal foursome's biggest curveball yet. Dealing in the agony of unrequited love, the track is scream-free and uses strings for the first time, courtesy of guitarist Liam Phelan.
Contact: Claire Harris
claire@nuclearblast.co.uk



RUCCI LSE
No Rush **(Island)**
Extremely catchy, replete with a quaking bassline and a sample of Ja Rule and Ashanti's Wonderful, No Rush appears tailor-made as a summer anthem. Even the verses feel like choruses, which is no mean feat considering that this is emerging UK rapper Rucci LSE's debut single.
Contact: Shireen Fenner
shireen@shireenfenner.com

AYRA STARR
Rhythm & Blues **(Mavin/Platoon)**
In the two years since her excellent debut album 19 & Dangerous was released, Ayra Starr has continued to rise at a rapid rate. Her fanbase numbers (almost nine million followers across TikTok and Instagram, 10m monthly listeners on Spotify) and Gen Z relatability continue to impress, but the 21-year-old's biggest asset is the earthiness of her sound. New single Rhythm & Blues, which trails this month's second album, is brilliant in its simplicity. Minimal Afrobeats production from Sparrq and Johnny Drille affords Starr the space to breathe on a heartfelt love song, effortlessly delivering line after line in an effort to describe the security and euphoria of relationship life.
Contact: David Lim
david@outsideorganisation.com

Hear **THE PLAYLIST** at spotify.com/user/musicweek

TASTE MAKERS

The industry's favourite new sounds

Megan Townsend, Deputy editor, Mixmag

YETSUBY – WATER FLASH

There have been so many incredible releases this summer, but one artist that has really stood out for me has been Seoul-based Taiwanese producer and DJ Yetsuby. She is otherwise known as one half of ambient duo Salamanda and is one of the founders of Computer Music Club, both of which have a reputation for their experimental approach to electronica.

As a solo artist, Yetsuby has been generating buzz since her 2022 EP JIN 06, which melded contemporary glitch with drum & bass nostalgia. It looked beyond the soft soundscapes of her collaborative work, with one track inspired by a Korean folk tale about a bear that becomes human after consuming onions and garlic.

The Water Flash EP, which landed in July, sees Yetsuby combine moody atmospherics with club-angled rhythms to create a record that defies expectations at every turn.

Over four tracks, it uses percussion to deliver positive highs, while synths provide a foreboding texture for her drums to float above. It feels challenging, while still sanguine and harmonious. I expect we'll be hearing much more from Yetsuby in the near future.

MAKING WAVES

THIS MONTH'S HOTTEST BRAND NEW ACT

DEYAZ

The self-taught Londoner turning emotion and experience into alternative-indie anthems...

Key Track: Bones
Label: Black Butter
Management: Zach Kardisch, Night Media & Andre Herd, ITM Artists
Instagram: @deyaz

What was the inspiration behind your latest single Bones?
"Bones was actually written around two years ago and came really naturally [at the time], but it took a while to release it because it reminded me of a toxic relationship I had, and it was overall a very sensitive period. I built my own stigma towards the song, but in the last year I've felt more free from that narrative."

There is a sense of vulnerability to your music. Is songwriting therapeutic for you?
"When I feel overwhelmed, I automatically seem to go towards creating, it's second nature to me. Throughout my life, whenever I've been in detrimental situations, music has been a consistent thing that's pulled me out. I guess that could be because I'm not as vocal outside of music in regards to mental health."

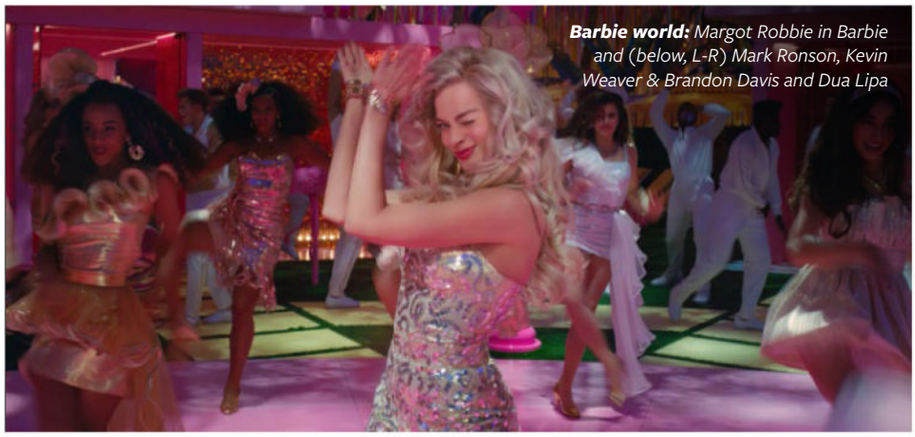
You received a scholarship at Junior Guildhall but decided to leave. How do you look back on that decision now?
"When I went there at 14 or 15, my family were over the moon. With professional [teachers], it gave me stability and tied some loose ends with what I'd been learning at home, but I struggled adapting to the classical and jazz culture, which isn't wrong, it's disciplined. But music for me needs to feel like it's coming from real life and fun. I have no regrets, leaving allowed me to continue my journey. There were probably more faults this way, but I think the lessons you learn yourself have more of an imprint on you than lessons from someone else."

You're currently working on your second EP. How has this project differed from your first?
"This one feels more cohesive because I have a lot more stability. The music is more advanced too, I hope, I've been working endlessly on it and have been more sober for it, which is very different for me. It's been nice being in touch with my feelings and [being able to] translate them into the music a bit more accurately."

Save the Deyaz: *Deyaz's single Bones is out now*

INTERVIEW: Miranda Bardsley **PHOTO:** Will Jaques

SYNC STORY



Barbie world: *Margot Robbie in Barbie and (below, L-R) Mark Ronson, Kevin Weaver & Brandon Davis and Dua Lipa*

BARBIE/DUA LIPA

BY MIRANDA BARDSLEY

This summer has seen audiences worldwide flock to cinemas to see Greta Gerwig's eagerly anticipated film Barbie, starring Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling, and boasting a star-studded, Mark Ronson-produced soundtrack.

For our Sync Story this month we turn to track two on the movie's accompanying album: Dua Lipa's UK No.1 hit Dance The Night, which has accumulated 265,42 sales to date, according to Official Charts Company data.

Dance The Night accompanies a disco sequence set in Gerwig's Barbie Land, and came about when Gerwig asked Ronson to create a pop-leaning track for the dance number which had already been written into the script. Ronson then reached out to Dua Lipa – who also features in the film – to work on and perform the track.

Atlantic Records, Warner Brothers and Mattel had been in discussion from the start of the film's development process about collaborating on the music, so when production began, Kevin Weaver, president of Atlantic Records, West Coast, and his team joined director Gerwig, co-writer Noah Baumbach, music supervisor George Drakoulias and Ronson to watch early cuts of the movie and plan the soundtrack, which was created entirely bespoke for the film.

Weaver reflects proudly on the process behind the sync spot.

"At Atlantic, we have a longstanding and very successful relationship with Warner Brothers, and also Mattel," he tells *Music Week*. "We fully immersed ourselves in the creative world of Barbie and our first job was to truly understand Greta Gerwig's ideas for the music and her vision for how it would become an integral part of the story."

"Mark had this incredible vision, put together the music bed for the song and then thought Dua Lipa would be the perfect artist to write the lyrics and melodies, and perform it," he continues. "It's an upbeat, disco-pop track with a contemporary swagger that really helps bring to life this massive moment at the very beginning of the film."

Spot: Barbie
Title: Dance The Night (From Barbie The Album)
Artist: Dua Lipa
Publisher: Songs Of Zelig, Andrew Wyatt Blakemore, Kobalt Music Publishing, Universal Polygram Int. Publishing, Sony Music Publishing, Warner-Barham
Master: Atlantic/Warner Bros
Director: Greta Gerwig
Production company: Heyday Films, LuckyChap Ent, NB/GG Pictures, Mattel
Air Date: 21.07.23

"We fully immersed ourselves in the creative world of Barbie"
Kevin Weaver, Atlantic Records

PHOTOS: Tyrell Hampton, Atlantic Records

WANT TO GET YOUR SYNC STORY IN MUSIC WEEK?
Email Miranda Bardsley at miranda.bardsley@futurenet.com for details.

KEY RELEASES

The essential albums heading your way...

SEPTEMBER 22

Carrie Underwood Denim & Rhinestones (Deluxe) Capitol
Chappell Roan The Rise And Fall Of A Midwest Princess Amusement/Island
Kelly Clarkson Chemistry: Deluxe Atlantic
Kylie Minogue Tension BMG
Matteo Bocelli Matteo Capitol
Paul Rodgers Midnight Rose Heartstar/Sun
Roosevelt Embrace Counter/Ninja Tune
Sincere Engineer Cheap Grills Hopeless
Starbenders Take Back The Night Sumerian
Stephen Sanchez Angel Face Mercury/Republic
Teenage Fanclub Nothing Lasts Forever PeMa

SEPTEMBER 29

Beverley Knight The Fifth Chapter Tag8/BMG
Black Stone Cherry Screamin' At The Sky Mascot
Code Orange The Above Blue Grape
Ed Sheeran Autumn Variations Gingerbread Man
Gunship Unicorn Horsie In The Edge
Haim Days Are Gone – 10th Anniversary UMR/Polydor
Heavy Lungs All Gas No Brakes Alcopop!
Jorja Smith Falling Or Flying Famm
Karen Harding Take Me Somewhere Ultra
Kelvin Krash Harsh Krashed
King Nun Lamb Marshall
Lucia & The Best Boys Burning Castles Communion
Meatraffle Base And Superstructure Blang
Michael Schulte Remember Me Polydor
Modern Nature No Fixed Point In Space Bella Union
Molly Burch Daydreamer Captured Tracks
Oliver Tree Alone In A Crowd Atlantic

Sigala Every Cloud Ministry Of Sound
The Brand New Heavies Never Stop... The Best Of London

TAYLOR SWIFT
1989 (Taylor's Version) is out October 27 via EMI

The Orb & David Gilmour Metallic Spheres In Colour Sony Music CG
Thomas Rhett 20 Number Ones Big Machine
Wilco Cousin DBPM

OCTOBER 6

Baby Queen Quarter Life Crisis Polydor
BoyWithUke Lucid Dreams Mercury/Republic
Claire Rosinkranz Just Because Slowplay/Republic
Colbie Caillat Along The Way Blue Jean Baby
Darius Rucker Carolyn's Boy Capitol/EMI
Dorian Electra Fanfare Dorian Electra
Incubus Morning View XXIII Virgin
Joe Bonamassa Blues Deluxe J&R Adventures
Joel Corry Another Friday Night Asylum/Atlantic
Meernaa So Far So Good Keeled Scales
Rick Astley Are We There Yet? BMG
Roger Waters The Dark Side Of The Moon Redux SGB/Cooking Vinyl
Stornoway Dig The Mountain! Cooking Vinyl
Sufjan Stevens Javelin Asthmatic Kitty
The Anchoress Versions Drowned In Sound
The Darkness Permission To Land... Again (20th Anniv.) Warner
Van Halen The Collection II Rhino

OCTOBER 13

Alexis Ffrench Christmas Piano With Alexis Sony Classical
Árabrot Of Darkness & Light Pelagic
Charlie Worsham Compadres Warner
Chvrches The Bones Of What You Believe (10th Anniv.) Virgin
Creeper Sanguivore Spinefarm

Crosses Goodnight, God Bless, I Love U, Delete Warner
Dream Nails Doom Loop Marshall
Gucci Mane Breath Of Fresh Air Atlantic
Holly Humberstone Paint My Bedroom Black Polydor/Darkroom/Geffen
Mist Redemption Warner

MIST
Redemption is out October 13 via Warner

Scouting For Girls The Place We Used To Meet Sony Music CG
The Drums Jonny Anti–
The Menzingers Some Of It Was True Epitaph
Troye Sivan Something To Give Each Other Polydor
Twin Temple God Is Dead Rise Above

OCTOBER 20

Alabama 3 Cold War Classics Volume 2 SubCat
Bombay Bicycle Club My Big Day Mmm.../AWAL
Jake Scott Lavender Elektra
Katy Perry Catalog Collector's Edition Boxset Capitol
Liz Phair Exile In Guyville (30th Anniversary) Matador
Me Rex Giant Elk Big Scary Monsters
Oxymorrons Melanin Punk Mascot
Pip Blom Bobbie Heavenly
Priya Ragu Santhosam Warner
Rival Sons Lightbringer Atlantic
Skinny Lister Shanty Punk Xtra Mile
Sun June Bad Dream Jaguar Run For Cover
The Streets The Darker The Shadow, The Brighter The Light 679/Warner

OCTOBER 27

Billy Bragg The Roaring Forty (1983-2023) Cooking Vinyl
Black Pumas Chronicles Of A Diamond Cooperative (PIAS)
DJ Shadow Action Adventure Mass Appeal/Liquid Amber
Duran Duran Danse Macabre Tape Modern via BMG
Fizz The Secret To Life Decca
James Blunt Who We Used To Be Atlantic
Mark Tremonti Christmas Classics New & Old Mark Tremonti
Mint Field Aprender A Ser Felte
Mötley Crüe Shout At The Devil BMG
Paws Paws Ernest Jenning
Poppy Zig Sumerian
Red Axes One More City Fabric Originals
Robert Finley Black Bayou Concord
Simple Minds New Gold Dream: Live From Paisley Abbey BMG
Taking Back Sunday 152 Fantasy
Taylor Swift 1989 (Taylor's Version) EMI
The Gaslight Anthem History Books Rich Mahogany/Thirty Tigers
The Kills God Games Domino
The Mountain Goats Jenny from Thebes Merge
Wargasm Venom Republic

NOVEMBER 3

Bad Wolves Die About It Better Noise
Black Grape Orange Head DGAFF
Daniel O'Donnell How Lucky I Must Be DMG TV
Kwes Rye Lane Warp
The Struts Pretty Vicious Big Machine/John Varvatos
Zoe Wees Therapy Capitol

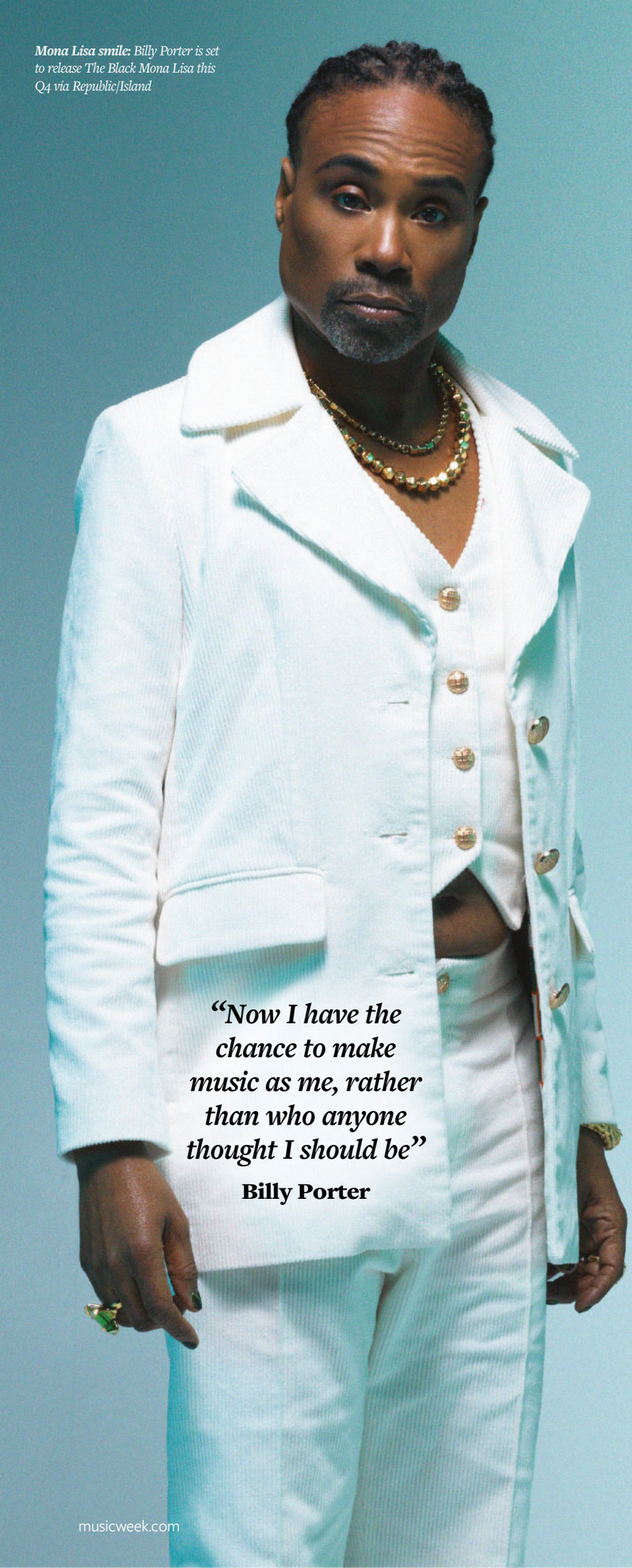
NOVEMBER 10

Chris Stapleton Higher UJC/Decca
Jelani Blackman The Heart Of It 18/MNRK UK

NOVEMBER 17

Dolly Parton Rockstar Big Machine

Please email any key releases information to isabelle.nesmon@futurenet.com
A more extensive release schedule is available in The new music section on musicweek.com



Mona Lisa smile: *Billy Porter is set to release The Black Mona Lisa this Q4 via Republic/Island*

INCOMING

As a star of stage and screen, **Billy Porter** has enjoyed a fascinating career that has taken in **Grammy**, **Emmy** and **Tony** Award wins. Ahead of his first pop album since 1997, *Music Week* meets the singer to unpick his musical vision...

The Black Mona Lisa is only your second non-Broadway inspired album and it's coming 26 years after your first. What prompted the decision to make it?
"I've been working on it for a couple of years and I'm really excited to be back in the mainstream music industry on my own terms. My first time in the industry was in the '90s, I had an R&B album [Untitled] that came out in 1997 and, y'know, they kicked my ass out! The business was violently homophobic at the time. I was blessed and lucky that I could do other shit, so I did. Then everything else happened for me, and all of a sudden the mainstream music industry came back to me. The world has evolved enough so that I can sit in the fullness of all this fabulousness you see before you."

How frustrated were you with what happened around your first record?
"The songs are great, but the production sounds like '90s R&B. They wanted me to sound like a straight Black man. I had no control and I didn't know how to get it. I had this idea in my mind as a young person that, 'They've had success and they know better than me, so I should listen to them.' And that was where I got into trouble. Ultimately, the good news is I failed as somebody else. I vowed to myself that I would never do that again. But I had no idea that I would get another chance. Now, I have a chance to do it the right way, to do it as me, as opposed to what they thought I should be. I don't give a fuck about the market. I am the market!"

So can you tell us what your pop vision is?
"The album is very expansive, I'm not afraid of playing with genre. We got the record deal and then I started writing. I locked in with the late, great Andrea Martin [who passed away in September 2021]. I wrote a couple of songs with her, one of them is [on the album] but I had to cut a couple of songs, so there were two of hers on there but now there's only one. But it's okay, I can use it at another time. I always like to have trump songs ready. I also landed with MNEK on a couple of songs, before working with Justin Tranter and his camp. That really helped me find the pop version of myself now – where I, as a 53-year-old out queer man, fit in that space. I've had to be versatile so that I could eat, and I come from the theatre where I had to learn how to do everything. I really love every minute of this album."

Who is The Black Mona Lisa?
"The album was actually called something else and we were in a writing session, just throwing out ideas and someone said, 'You're like the Black Mona Lisa.' The whole room went silent and then 20 minutes later we had written the song. The meaning of it is that, as artists, we make work that is relevant to the past, present and future. As an artist, I will always be relevant. I have to be and I always will be. I have to own that so I can show up to fulfil the calling that is my life."

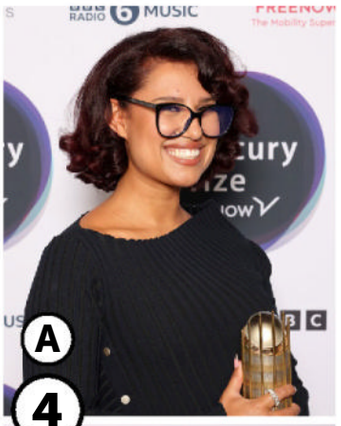
Given you're so active as an actor too, how do you balance your time?
"The universe decides for you. We had already planned to work on the music at this time and then the SAG [Screen Actors Guild] strike happened. That's the universe going, 'You've got more time for this,' because I was supposed to start a TV show and a film this September."

Talking of which, you're only missing the O for your EGOT – winning an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and a Tony. How will you fill in the gap?
"I have lots of plans I can't talk about right now [because of the strike] but just know that there are plans in the works! [*Laughs*]."

"Now I have the chance to make music as me, rather than who anyone thought I should be"
Billy Porter

INTERVIEW: Paul Stokes **PHOTO:** Franz Szony

HOTSHOTS



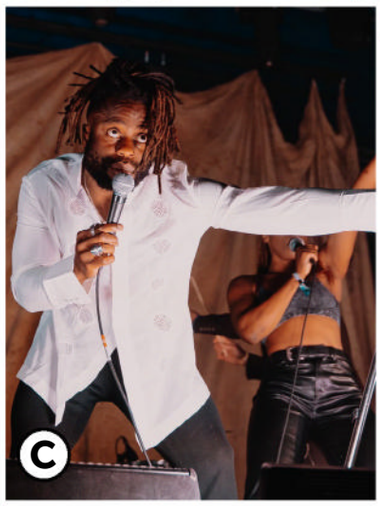
1. One in a billion To commemorate reaching one billion streams in the UK, Olivia Rodrigo was honoured with a BRIT Billion Award while in London to promote her latest single, Bad Idea Right?, from her new album Guts. (Photo: Polydor/BPI). **2. Taking the world by Stormz** Stormzy played a homecoming show to kick off this year's multi-weekend All Points East festival. (Photo: Khali Photography). **3. Doctor's orders** Chief executive and co-founder of Black Lives In Music Charisse Beaumont **(A)** and BLIM co-founder and director of operations Roger Wilson **(B)** were both presented with honorary doctorates from the University Of West London. (Photos: UWL). **4. Mercury rising** The Mercury Prize launch took place at The Langham Hotel in July. Pictured are nominees **(A)** Raye and **(B)** Olivia Dean. (Photos: John Marshall, JMEnternational). **5. Thick as thieves** Team RCA hosted a celebration at Sony Music for Nothing But Thieves in recognition of their No.1 album Dead Club City. Pictured are (*Top row, L-R*): Nothing But Thieves, Luke Smith, Joe Iddison, Luke Brickett. (*Bottom row, L-R*): Ange Joe, Will Stevens, Sophie Graham, Stacey Tang, Phil Youngman, Flore Barbay. **6. Saved by the bell** Team DawBell posed for a special shot during their annual Summer Sports Day. (Photo: DawBell).

7

8

A

B



C

9

A

B

10

11

12

7. More love Wizkid and Team Sony celebrated him becoming the first African artist to receive the BRIT Billion Award. Pictured are (*L-R*): Peter Edge, Lisa-Marie Boateng, Taponeswa Mavunga, Dipesh Parmar, Wizkid, Khari Oriogun, Amy Wheatley, John Fleckenstein, Angela Grech and Melissa Thomas. (Photo: Becca Wheeler). **8. Think green** Green Man festival featured a star-studded line-up. Pictured are: **(A)** Self Esteem headlining Saturday night. (Photo: Parri Thomas). **(B)** The Last Dinner Party. (Photo: Nici Eberl). **(C)** Young Fathers. (Nici Eberl). **9. Gala affair** Artists and execs came together at London's Sky Garden to honour Black excellence in the UK music and entertainment industries at this year's GRM Gala. The event welcomed figures including **(A)** Ms Banks. (Photo: Faysal Hassan). **(B)** Leigh-Anne Pinnock. (Photo: Anna Marguerite). **10. Hive mind** The Hives celebrated their new album, The Death Of Randy Fitzsimmons, at London's Rough Trade East. Pictured are (*L-R*): Chris Dangerous, Nicholaus Arson, The Johan And Only, Vigilante Carlstroem, Howlin' Pelle Almqvist. (Photo: OliveVsTheWorld). **11. Network hard, play hard** Ostereo's Networking Night returned to Tileyard's Vinyl Cafe for its Summer Ball. Pictured are (*L-R*): Harley Moon Kemp and Ostereo's John Saunderson. (Photo: Gary Thomas KYPA). **12. On the town** Sister duo Alt Blk Era played Boomtown festival. (Photo: Alice Sutton).

For Padam sure:
Kylie Minogue

"It's wild that I can say this is my first viral moment!"
KYLIE

TENSION IN THE AIR

Kylie Minogue is back! Hot on the heels of viral single **Padam Padam** – her biggest song in a decade – the pop legend is about to release her brilliant new album **Tension**. With her music making a big splash on TikTok, radio and in the charts, and a Vegas residency in the offing, the star – joined by **A&P Artist Management**, **BMG** and **CAA** – tells *Music Week* how, 35 years after releasing her debut album, she's still finding new ways to become even bigger than ever...

WORDS: JAMES HANLEY
COVER/OPENING SHOT: EDWARD COOKE

For the longest time, there was always a running gag among Kylie Minogue's inner circle. She was destined for the Las Vegas Strip, they said. It was the safest bet in town, they said. The only question was when.

"We would joke that I was definitely going to end up in Vegas," laughs Kylie, cheerily greeting *Music Week* from Down Under. "Many years ago – on the Showgirl tour in 2005 – we were saying, 'This should be in Vegas.' And then Aphrodite in 2011 should absolutely have been in Vegas. It would've made way more sense to be there as opposed to packing up precision water fountains in a truck and schlepping them to the next location."

The inevitable will finally become a reality in November when the Australian's debut Las Vegas stint, More Than Just A Residency, premieres at The Venetian Resort's new 1,000-seat Voltaire venue. Kylie's famously fervent fanbase snapped up tickets for the original 10 dates in four-and-a-half hours in August, with an additional 10 then selling out in just 30 minutes. She describes the response as "overwhelming".

"It's such an intimate venue and I'm hoping people can get their tickets. But overall, it's super-exciting," Kylie confides (in me). "It feels like the right time. It's something a bit different for me and it's something different for Vegas, so I've got quite a bit of work in the next couple of months to get ready for that."

Once the preserve of ageing legends, a Sin City residency is a much more palatable proposition for today's superstars, post Britney Spears' transformative Piece Of Me run. Indeed, Kylie needed no persuasion to try her luck in the gambling capital of the world while still at the top of her game.

"Vegas seemed to be more for the twilight of one's career, but in the interim it has had this rejuvenation," she observes. "That is not taking away from what that was, because it has worked so well for people historically. But it's true that it's pretty happening right now, so I thought it was a good time."

Which brings us neatly to why things are "pretty happening" right now: Kylie's sublime electropop-infused new album Tension, which is out on BMG UK on September 22. It marks a new chapter of a career that has continued to grow and grow over the course of decades. Today in conversation, Kylie tips her hat in reverence to Australia's women's football team, the Matildas ("It is amazing to see the positive effect they are having on young girls, in fact, all women," she hails. "They are inspiring!"). In truth, she could just as easily be describing her own influence since she rose to fame on Neighbours in the 1980s (she reprised her role as Charlene Robinson for the Aussie soap's finale last year).

"That is very kind of you to say," she says of the assertion. "I would like to think that from the early days of mechanic Charlene that I helped girls and women to feel empowered in themselves and their chosen field."

Kylie has made only sporadic acting appearances since crossing over to music and signing to Mushroom Records in 1987. Indeed, the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) recognises Kylie as the highest-selling domestic recording artist of all time, with career sales surpassing 80 million.

"I had to learn everything on the job and learn it fast," reflects the singer on her journey through the music industry. "There are definitely times when I didn't get it right but I have felt supported through that and was given the space to discover myself as a person and as an artist. I have bent to others' wills at times and I have second guessed myself or been persuaded or dissuaded in a manner that wasn't ideal, but I stayed the course and have always fought, mostly with a quiet determination, for my place."

"I think it is simply a fact that this industry is harder for women," she argues. "It seems that the industry as a whole has had to take a good look at itself and change any of the antiquated views which should no longer be tolerated."

A quick recap: The Grammy and BRIT-winning Kylie Minogue has, to date, amassed seven No.1 and 35 Top 10 singles, alongside eight No.1 albums in the UK alone, netting a chart-topper in each of the last five decades. Such accomplishments do not simply come by chance.

"At the core she is an incredible artist with an incredible drive to create," offers Polly Bhowmik of A&P Artist Management. "It's in her being, so whilst she has incredible teams around her, she is the centre of everything she does and drives and inspires us all."

And where she is driving next is going to have the whole world paying close attention...

Present Tension: *Kylie launching her Las Vegas residency ahead of Tension's release and (right) playing the Capital Summertime Ball at Wembley Stadium*

Billed as "a record of pleasure-seeking, empowered dancefloor bangers and sultry pop cuts," Tension reunites Kylie with long-time collaborators Biff Stannard (Spice Girls, Little Mix) and Duck Blackwell (Louis Tomlinson, Wiz Khalifa) on seven of its 11 songs. Superstar DJ Oliver Heldens guests on penultimate song 10 Out Of 10, while track nine Vegas High was a late inclusion ("I can't say I started Tension knowing Vegas would definitely happen," Kylie says).

Unlike her last couple of albums, there is no definitive theme running through Kylie's latest body of work, and she lets out a chuckle when asked to place it within the "Kylie canon".

"It marks where I am at this point in time," she contends. "I enjoyed not having a theme, which we started with but it wasn't really working, so it felt quite liberating. So much of the previous album Disco was done in lockdown. I didn't get to tour it. And so with this album, I was just so eager to get out of the gates."

Though Kylie prefers to keep her private life just that, she has disclosed that making Tension helped her "navigate challenging times and celebrate the now". "Personal matters – some people know of, some they don't," is how she puts it to *Music Week*.

"I was happy to get some of these emotions out of myself," she elaborates. "The studio can be like therapy. So yes, some challenging moments, which almost everyone has. But to be able to express some of those things – particularly with a song like Story or Hold On To Now where, in some parts, I'm not even exactly sure what I'm saying – that's why we write songs. It's hard to express this stuff in normal dialogue. So, anyway, some challenging stuff and other moments where we were out of Covid times, which is where I lived my last album, and just going, 'Yeah, I'll give it a try.' I'll try everything actually. That's what's good with trusted people in the studio – you can just try it and see if it works."

Tension sees the continuation of Kylie's impressive stint as an independent artist via her partnership with BMG, which has so far produced a hat-trick of No.1 records in the form of 2018's country pop-powered Golden (167,484 sales, OCC) and 2020's Disco (178,987 sales), as well as 2019 compilation Step Back In Time – The Definitive Collection (224,627 sales). BMG's SVP, UK recordings Jamie Nelson is eager to maintain the partnership's 100% hit rate.

"Going into this record, Kylie was keen to take the shackles off and try to head into some spots that we'd not explored for a while, and I think that has really paid off," says Nelson. "It's been an ongoing process of development. The last two albums have seen incredible progression from her – not just from a sales perspective, but creatively – and she's managed to redefine her career yet again."

> "Everyone takes their own lessons from Kylie – I've learnt that there is no shortcut to success, pick your battles and follow your gut"
>
> POLLY BHOWMIK, A&P ARTIST MANAGEMENT

"My favourite Kylie song? Are you kidding me?! The addition of the Tension tracks don't exactly help me pick!"
KYLIE

PHOTOS: Shutterstock/Global, Matt Winkelmeyer/Staff, Getty

"As ever with her, she's only focused on quality music," he adds. "She'll cut more songs than anybody else. She'll reimagine songs five, six, seven times before she's got them exactly aligned to her vision. She worked tremendously hard to deliver amazing and exceptional music."

The relationship between Nelson and Kylie dates back to their days together at Parlophone on 2000's Light Years.

"I first met Jamie in 1999, the same year that I met Biff, one of my producers," reminisces Kylie. "I respect him so much and I know he genuinely cares for me and my musical output. If I was ever in a band, it would be with him because he is good at challenging me."

Having worked with Kylie on and off for 20-plus years, Nelson has developed a sixth sense for what makes her tick.

"She's always been keen to reset and deliver creative that is constantly moving the narrative forward," he says. "There are artists that do that to a certain extent, but I haven't worked with any that have had the ability to switch that up so many times. I think it's partly because she has a sense of trusting people that she works with – be it producers, choreographers, directors, designers – to bring in the most incredible ideas. She will support and back people that she trusts, and she does all of that in the context of understanding who her audience is and the importance of being progressive. Those things combined offer her an edge on other artists and to be doing that into this point of her career is quite extraordinary."

That edge, Nelson argues, is paying dividends.

"We're seeing constant progression now in North America, for example, which is continuously growing for us," he says. "She's in new markets with new opportunities to find new fans all the time."

Tension has, of course, already yielded Kylie's biggest hit in nearly a decade in the enchanting Padam Padam (250,485 sales), which received its live debut on American Idol in May. The Lostboy/Ina Wroldsen co-write peaked at No.8 on the UK chart and went Top 40 in the US – unheard of for an artist in their 50s on their 16th LP. A canny sales campaign by BMG included cassette and CD editions, alongside the release of an extended version – sealing Kylie's first Top 10 solo entry since 2010's All The Lovers.

"We always want to have hits or moments that feel very significant and we certainly have that this time with Padam Padam, but that wasn't necessarily the main focus," insists Nelson. "We managed to have phenomenal success on the last album, for example, just through continuously dropping great music, as opposed to it being defined by one particular moment. And we've been lucky enough – and it's been great enough – to benefit from something that's really captured people's imagination on this record. From my perspective, we need to constantly continue to broaden her reach. She's an iconic, generational pop artist who's best in class when it comes to the way she delivers her art. We want to back that and make sure she's reaching the largest possible audience. I'm absolutely confident that we're continuing that journey at the moment."

As BMG's senior marketing manager Anna Derbyshire sees it, it strikes just the right tone at the right time, smack bang in the middle of the post-pandemic dance boom (or Padam-ic, if you read The Guardian).

"After lockdown there is a desire to let go a little bit and I think what you saw across the board with Padam Padam represented freedom, euphoria and joy," she suggests. "It was a real release."

It has also been adopted as a Pride anthem, reinforcing Kylie's longstanding bond with the LGBTQ+ community – a connection she holds dear.

"I just continue to do what I've always done, which is be supportive and open – be open-minded, open-hearted – and that's the way I intend to stay," she says. "It's always been very simple for me. It's highly complex for a lot of members of the community of course, but I try to just be available and in return the community has done so much for me. It's a very organic and wonderful relationship."

For Kylie, whose Zoom name shows up as "Padam", the brilliant, sub three-minute banger offered a crash course in 2023 hitmaking.

"When Padam came in as a demo, I assumed the rest of the song was going to be built out," she reflects. "But Jamie said, 'No, it doesn't need to go to a middle eight and come back for another chorus.' That was an adjustment for me to go, 'Okay, that works.' So I'm not afraid of the most noticeable change, which is the duration of the song. I can understand it now I've seen the amazing impact it's had with Padam."

The ubiquitous dancefloor-filler has even earned the evergreen star her first viral smash, inspiring countless TikTok creations, memes and videos. After more than 35 years in the game, Kylie is still finding ways to break new territory.

"It's wild that I can say that this is a first for me to have a viral moment," enthuses Kylie. "The song's catchy, hypnotic, modern, a bit kooky and a really good fit for me. Then the video managed to amplify all of that with its otherworldliness and overload of Padam red. I had hoped at some point to connect more on TikTok but I didn't know now would be the time! I've been so touched and amazed at people's ingenuity, passion and humour. We all had high hopes for the song, but I don't think any of us expected it to take off the way it did as a viral hit. So I'm going along with the ride and we've

All the covers: *Kylie stars on the cover of Music Week in 2020 (top) and the Tension album artwork (bottom)*

ROLE CALL
MEET TEAM KYLIE MINOGUE

Management: A&P Artist Management
Label: BMG UK
President: Alistair Norbury
SVP, A&R: Jamie Nelson
Senior director, marketing: Anna Derbyshire
Senior director, digital marketing: Darbi Donaldson
Agent: Emma Banks (CAA)
Press: Sarah Henderson, Murray Chalmers, Fiona Raisbeck (MCPR)
Radio: Kevin McCabe (Kevin McCabe Promotions) & Steve Tandy (Copmedia)
TV: Niki Sanderson, Stuart Kenning (Nonstop Promotions)
Creative Commissioner: Faye Purcell

PHOTOS: Edward Cooke, Darenote Limited

> "It's a fact that this industry is harder for women – the business has had to take a good look at itself and change its antiquated views"
> KYLIE

had to pivot as well – because it was unexpected."

Derbyshire points to the American Idol performance of Padam Padam for positioning the track as an international concern.

"What was heartening was the speed at which Capital and Kiss came on board in the UK," she says. "And then obviously the virality of the track – the video, the visuals and UGC stuff – started to snowball. Kylie saw it, enjoyed it and leaned into it in a very warm, fun way."

Another defining moment was Kylie's surprise appearance at the Capital Summertime Ball at Wembley Stadium in June.

"What was so great about that was to see not just the mums and dads in the crowd, but the kids going wild for her as well," continues Derbyshire. "That exemplified what we saw on TikTok where you've got under 25s who couldn't care less how old she is. They thought, 'She looked great, she's cool, it's a banger and I'm going to enjoy creating my own content on the back of it.'"

Kylie, who had built up almost 350,000 followers and 3.1m likes on TikTok at the last count, agrees that the broad-mindedness of Generation Z has been key to the tune's virality.

"It feels like we're in a more accepting time where it's not cool to be ageist," she says. "And ironically, it's the younger people who are not tied down with this oppressive and limited notion of what you can and can't do. So that's good timing on my part, but I've never stopped. I've been the youngest kid in the room and now I'm one of the older generation in the room. And every part of the way – and every age that I've been in my career – presents a different challenge."

> "We're seeing constant progression in America, Kylie's in new markets with opportunities to find new fans all the time"
> JAMIE NELSON, BMG

The issue came to the fore when BBC Radio 1 initially declined to playlist Padam Padam in a move the station denied was motivated by ageism ("Each track is considered for the playlist based on its musical merit and whether it is right for our target audience, with decisions made on a case-by-case basis," a spokesperson said). The track was eventually C-listed following a fan backlash.

"There was obviously a lot of chatter about Padam and female artists of a certain age, but I think she transcended it," reckons Derbyshire. "It's a matter of quality and what she's saying and presenting being good enough – and it's been surely proven that it is. The fact that she ended up with the UK No.1 airplay record is great."

Derbyshire has similarly high aspirations for the next single, Tension's title track.

"We're very confident that it's an incredible song," she says. "It's brilliant, and I think people are going to really love it for the same reasons as Padam, but it's not a carbon copy."

Padam Padam has been streamed more than 63m times on Spotify, with Kylie's current monthly listenership on the platform standing at nearly 15m. That her numbers are on the rise is not happenstance, but the result of a sustained push behind the scenes.

"Our relationship with Kylie started out with Golden and by the time we got to Disco, the streaming area was a real focus," notes Derbyshire. "Disco was a two-year campaign: there was the main

"It feels like the right time to do Vegas – it's something a bit different for me!"
KYLIE

album release, then the Guest List Edition a year later, and that was two years of build. By the time we got to Padam, we'd seen massive growth in North America and other parts of the world and that was able to be built on, because the foundations had already been laid. There's real understanding from everybody on the team and a great relationship with management as well. It all works as a great ecosystem."

A BBC Radio 2 poll conducted in the run-up to Kylie's headline set at Radio 2 In The Park in Leicester this month revealed 2001 classic Can't Get You Out Of My Head to be the nation's favourite Kylie song, followed by Spinning Around (2000) and Better The Devil You Know (1990). But what's Kylie's favourite?

"Favourite Kylie song? Are you kidding me?!" she laughs. "With the addition of the Tension tracks, I don't think this helps me at all to choose my favourite. Of the Tension songs it would be Padam and Hold On To Now vying for contention!"

A consistent tool in Kylie's music-making armoury is to ask herself, "What is the song I haven't done yet?"

"It always motivates me," she explains. "I'm still thinking that and the album is not even out. I just love music. I love working with producers and musicians – it's literally such a happy place for me. It rings true when you hear people saying [the studio] is a safe space where there's an unwritten rule that you may reveal parts of yourself that you might not elsewhere. There is the endless lure of creativity that is just wondrous, frustrating and compelling. I probably go in closer to who I am the majority of the time, as opposed to who I am publicly as a pop star, so it really can be an amazing place – if you're with the right people. Otherwise, you can't wait to get out of the door!"

Even that danger has been largely eradicated since Kylie began recording remotely during Covid-19, showing herself to be a natural at Logic Pro ("I can't tell you what a game-changer it is," she observes).

"One thing that's incredible about Kylie is that she defines her own career," states Nelson.

"When we went through the whole lockdown thing, there were artists across the board that took some time out. The first thing Kylie did was build her own studio."

"There have been certain things we've worked on where Jamie's said, 'We can book you a studio,' and I've just said, 'No thanks, I'm really happy to do it myself,'" says Kylie. "There were times in my past where there was so much pressure with the studio. 'You've got to get the vocals today, you've got to get this, you've got to get that.' And as a somewhat insecure person at times, some of that was not fun. But now there is another way and it's opened up so much more potential for me to have access anytime I want, and I can lose myself in that world."

And that's just one world Kylie can lose herself in...

Until Elton John came along this year with his farewell set, Kylie's Glastonbury legends slot in 2019 attracted the biggest audience in the festival's history. The performance was all the more poignant given she was forced to pull out of her scheduled headline set 14 years earlier after being diagnosed with breast cancer.

"After the cancellation of Kylie's Pyramid Stage headline performance in 2005 due to health issues, it had been on the agenda for some time for Kylie to finally make it to Glastonbury," says her agent, 2023's Music Week Awards Strat winner Emma Banks of CAA. "It took a while for the timing to be right but the stars aligned in 2019 for Kylie to perform – Golden was a No.1 album in the UK and Kylie was clearly perfect to grace the fields of Worthy Farm. Kylie just blew everyone away that day – I think everyone on site wanted to watch, the crowd had the best time and the security did a choreography routine to one of the songs which was fabulous. It felt like everyone watched that performance – if not on site then on television – and everyone was talking about Kylie!"

> "The evolution of Kylie's live show and how she presents her music is fascinating to watch"
>
> EMMA BANKS, CAA

Better the Devil Minogue: *(Clockwise from top left) Kylie winning the 2004 Grammy for Best Dance Recording, on the set of Neighbours with Jason Donovan in 1990 and during her triumphant Glastonbury set in 2019*

Sadly, the Covid touring shutdown meant Kylie was unable to fully capitalise on the momentum from her memorable turn in Somerset. But Banks confirms further live dates could be in the pipeline.

"Obviously the Vegas residency is on sale and going incredibly well, which is such good news," she says. "We have lots of plans for more shows around the world which will be announced soon. Everyone has a good time at a Kylie show and I think the evolution of the show and how Kylie presents her music is a fascinating thing to watch."

"She is and will most likely remain an enigma, shapeshifting through the years," remarks Polly Bhowmik. "Some say she is timeless – this could be attributed to her more or less consistent presence in so many people's lives, no matter what age. I think everyone takes their own lessons or advice from Kylie and her career. I know I've learnt that there is no shortcut to success, pick your battles and follow your gut."

Bhowmik goes on to reflect on how their working partnership has evolved over the years.

"As with any relationship, you get to know someone better over time and understand how they work, what matters to them, their nuances," she explains. "I think the sense of responsibility has always been there. Kylie is Kylie, her career and everything to do with it speaks for itself. At the start, the responsibility was to not let her down, not to let her fans down, as you're working with someone with an extraordinary legacy. Over time that sense of responsibility has only grown as you understand from an artist perspective what Kylie is looking to achieve in the future, and you want to help her achieve those goals in what is an illustrious career, and to ensure everything is of a standard befitting of her."

Here Bhowmik lands on an important point.

"The key thing is recognising that Kylie is one human being at the epicentre of everything," she says. "And the main thing for us is to always be aware of this and protect that in everything we do. The biggest challenge is managing the incoming and prioritisation. It is a close-knit team – myself, Alli Main and Gemma Reilly-Hammond work with specialists in the different facets of Kylie's career and businesses. Top of our list is to make sure all those areas feel part of the overall team, have the information they need to best carry out their respective roles and to empower people to do their best."

And as for what they are looking to achieve going forward?

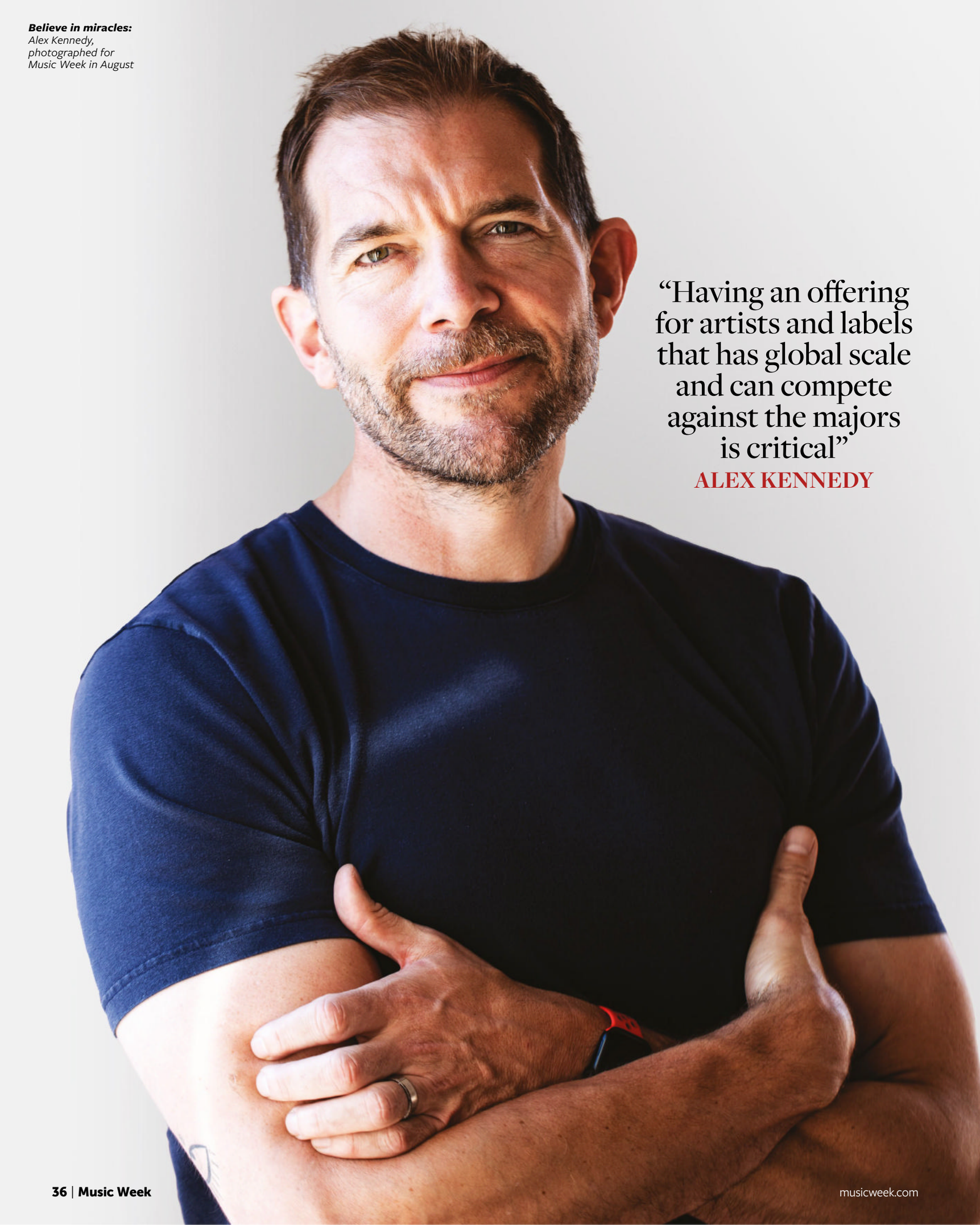
"The future?" ponders Bhowmik. "Well, in some ways we say a few days ahead is a lifetime in Kylie world, in other ways, we are planning well into 2025. All I know is that there is likely to be a 17th album, probably an 18th and so on. The music is in her!"

So long as it is, the world – and the UK especially, given Bhowmik hails the honorary Brit as "part of the cultural fabric" – will be listening. Kylie moved to London in 1990 and received an OBE in 2008 for services to music. As she attempts to contextualise her relationship with her adopted home before we part ways, the memory of her near disastrous teenage visit to London to work with British songwriting factory Stock Aitken Waterman comes back to her.

"I just had a flash of going to the UK when I was 19," she smiles. "The story that we all know: Stock Aitken Waterman. I Should Be So Lucky happens more or less before I got on a plane back to Australia... I can't quite believe that I spent all that time, and continue to spend time, in the UK and I'm part of British music. It's just unreal to me, but my entire education in music has been in the UK."

> "It's not just mums and dads in the crowd, the kids are going wild for Kylie as well"
>
> ANNA DERBYSHIRE, BMG

PHOTOS: Erik Melvin, Jeff Kravitz/FilmMagic, Impressions, Ian Gavan/Stringer, Getty



Believe in miracles: *Alex Kennedy, photographed for Music Week in August*

"Having an offering for artists and labels that has global scale and can compete against the majors is critical"

ALEX KENNEDY

THE Music Week INTERVIEW

ALEX KENNEDY

Believe UK's latest landmark success came when the company triumphed in the Label/Artist Services category at the **Music Week Awards** in May, and managing director **Alex Kennedy** promises much more to come. Here, *Music Week* meets the executive to talk expansion, AI, taking on the majors and how, in terms of his career, rugby's loss was the music industry's gain...

WORDS: JAMES HANLEY **PHOTOS:** LOUISE HAYWOOD-SCHIEFER

Music wasn't Alex Kennedy's first port of call. The Believe UK managing director originally thought he'd found his vocation in rugby union. But while his younger brother Nick would go on to represent his country and win the 2013 Heineken Cup with Toulon, Alex's sporting dream was kicked into touch almost as soon as it had begun.

"I was two games into a professional rugby career when I had to retire," the elder Kennedy discloses to *Music Week*. "I played for a team in the first division called Henley Hawks and I'd just made it into the first team. My dream was to graduate to the premier league, but two games in I destroyed my knee and the surgeon said, 'You've got to quit.'"

Now, Kennedy is philosophical about what happened.

"I'm six foot six and the best part of 17 stone and my brother actually went on to be a full-time professional, so we've definitely got it in the genes," he says. "But I was not destined to be a rugby player. So although music is my first love, it was definitely my second career choice."

The Kennedy family's talents are not limited to sport – his sister Kate is an actor who starred in the Paramount+ TV series Halo ("We've definitely got some interesting careers between the three of us"). But with Alex's rugby hopes in tatters, he took time out to go travelling as he plotted his next move, settling on a master's degree in advertising and marketing.

"That brought me into the music industry," says the father of two. "I started out doing cover mounts on national newspapers, where they were trying to boost their circulation by having CDs on the front pages. My first job was actually licensing music, pressing CDs and working with newspapers and magazines."

Kennedy may describe his career path "as probably more luck rather than design", but he quickly felt the pull of the music industry.

"There was a core premise that I always wanted to work in – and get experience in – all areas of the music industry, because I was fascinated by what a mad ecosystem it is," he says.

From those less than conventional beginnings, Kennedy has built a vast and varied CV over two decades in the business, culminating in his move to Believe UK last year. His past jobs include chief commercial officer at D2C platform Music Glue, head of commercial development at Sky Tickets, head of music licensing at Sky TV and head of publishing at Omnifone. He has also worked in artist management, representing Doc Brown, aka Ben Bailey Smith.

"I first started working tangentially in the music business 20 years ago, so people would describe me as a music industry veteran," says Kennedy. "At 44, I don't really feel like one, but I guess 20 years is a decent amount of experience. And over those 20 years, I've pretty much done a bit of everything."

Kennedy says simply "following my nose" has got him this far.

"I guess the main thing is just not being afraid to take risks and try different things," he continues. "You can develop a muscle with that where you're comfortable with being uncomfortable, and I think it allows you to gain a lot of transferable skills. As I said, a lot of it was luck rather than some masterplan. But it's definitely been an interesting 20 years."

Kennedy is convinced, however, that it was his role as co-founder and COO of retail tech start-up Givvit that enabled him to join the dots for what came thereafter.

"I went through the whole [process of] designing a product, raising money and launching a business, the classic start-up trajectory," he explains. "Looking back on it, that has probably had as much, if not more, impact on my career than the more classic industry jobs I've done. And I think the combination of both has led me to this path at Believe. The company is a brilliant marriage of music and technology and I think that's why I've really enjoyed the job so far and why, I'm guessing, they thought that I'd be a good fit."

Paris-headquartered digital music business Believe, which acquired publishing platform Sentric in March 2023, recently reported that revenues increased by 17.5% year-on-year to €415.4 million in the first half of 2023. The company, whose brands include TuneCore, Nuclear Blast, Naïve and Groove Attack, achieved recorded revenue growth of 23.9% in Europe (excluding France and Germany) over the first half of this year.

Kennedy's appointment by company founder and CEO Denis Ladegaillerie came just two months after Believe UK landed its first No.1 UK Album with Don Broco's Amazing Things (28,816 sales, OCC). Earlier this year, the indie giant solidified its UK leadership team by promoting Malena Wolfer to director of artist services, Ben Rimmer to regional director, label & artist solutions and Panos Polimatidis to head of label and artist solutions.

With Karishma Anand installed as managing director, operations in November 2022, Believe's UK office has reached a new plateau on Kennedy's watch, receiving the ultimate hat tip from its peers by coming out on top in the Label & Artist Services category at the 2023 Music Week Awards.

"It was a phenomenal result for us," beams Kennedy. "I'm a relatively late joiner

– I've been here just about 18 months – so a lot of the credit goes to Ben, Malena and Panos, who have been growing the business together over the last few years."

Wolfer says that Believe is now at a pivotal point.

"I can't wait to continue building on our previous success stories to bring us into a new era that will see the company grow faster than ever," she says. "Most importantly, we want to continue to support artists and independent labels as a trusted, dedicated and transparent partner."

Rimmer shares that enthusiasm.

"There has never been a better time to be independent," he says. "There are so many exciting innovative opportunities across new digital technologies, artist discovery and audience development that perfectly align with our model."

Kennedy and his team are justifiably bullish, and the MD believes the wider industry is taking note of their work, too.

"I think the industry recognition of Believe has caught up with where we are and that has been transformative for the team," he says. "To be recognised as the best this year in an incredibly competitive group at the Music Week Awards is just so gratifying. It's a lovely stamp of validation. We're getting a lot of calls from artists and labels that maybe we hadn't spoken to in a little while, or have never spoken to before, and that's fantastic. It means more people are hearing about us and our reputation has burgeoned even more."

The honour came after a banner year in which the firm secured label deals with Hospital and Rinse and launched electronic music-dedicated global imprint B:Electronic. Matt Sassari, whose monthly Spotify listenership has ballooned from just 500 to over nine million over the course of an 18-month global campaign with Believe label client Cr2 Records, is another notable success story.

Believe also worked on the breakthrough campaign for Knucks' debut album Alpha Place (63,653 sales), which entered the UK album chart at No.3. The rapper was the most nominated artist at the 2022 MOBOs, and was the joint winner of Album Of The Year, alongside Little Simz. Kennedy feels that Knucks' trajectory is the "perfect encapsulation" of what Believe is able to achieve with artists.

"We've had Knucks on our roster on the distribution side for a long time," shares Kennedy. "He left to go to Island Records, but didn't enjoy the major label experience and came back. And then we brought him up to artist services and through to the album. He had four singles in the Top 75 and he won the MOBO. That is the perfect indicator to the industry of what we can do – that we can deliver those types of campaigns and that type of artist development at the very highest level."

To pore over that and a whole lot more, *Music Week* tackles Kennedy for an extensive head-to-head...

True believers: *Team Believe on stage at the Music Week Awards with host Vick Hope (top) and (bottom, L-R) Panos Polimatidis, Malena Wolfer, Karishma Anand, Alex Kennedy and Ben Rimmer*

What was your strategy when you first joined Believe UK?

"My initial aims were, number one, to provide strong leadership for the team because they hadn't had an MD for a while. That was mainly due to Covid, but also floating on the stock exchange. The MD role at Believe is quite unique when compared to some of the other competitors, given that the business is based in France and it's very tech-based. One of the key elements for me was to talk to the press and shine a light on quite how successful Believe UK is as a business now. If you consider that as phase one, phase two is to take the business to the next level, growth-wise and client-wise. I think we've made some brilliant signings in the last year or so, but we want to get a lot more focused in our strategy and make sure that we're focusing on set genres and types of artists and labels that we can deliver the most value for. We don't want to be all things to all people, we want to have an absolute premium service."

You recently confirmed a series of senior promotions. Why is this the team to lead the company forward?

"Firstly, it was bringing in a counterpart for me to help run what is now a decent-sized business. My expertise is definitely not in finance and definitely not in operations, so we brought in Karishma Anand, who brings a stellar finance background with her and we're essentially now running the business in tandem. The other announcement was promoting Malena, Ben and Panos. Those three are the real DNA of the UK business. Panos and Ben have been here 10 years and developed the business completely on the distribution side, and Malena has built that artist services business in her vision over the last seven years. We've now reached a critical threshold where we think we're perfectly placed to accelerate the growth of the business and have all the expertise that we need."

Believe is a key global player – what are your market share ambitions for recordings?

"It's an interesting one, isn't it? Because we're number one, market share-wise, in a number of territories in Asia and we're up there in France and Germany now as well. We're probably the fourth biggest overall [services] business now on the recorded side, and I've said it before and I'll say it again – our aim is to try and catch up to one of the major [services businesses] over the next five or so years. With our current rate of growth, we believe we can catch up."

On that subject, how do you plan to rival the majors in the years ahead in terms of market power?

"Look, it's a very tricky battle because I think the majors are really starting to focus their efforts on the services business. It's highly competitive, but we've built our business purely on this premise. We're not trying to retrofit and pivot, so we've been able to build a very slick and integrated global operation. We've focused on investing in the big upcoming markets. In Southeast Asia and India, China, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines, we're in the top three if not No.1 in market share in a lot of those territories – and that's because we've invested a long way in advance of some of our competitors. We've gone to where we think the ball is going to be kicked and invested very heavily and are doing amazing work, signing huge amounts of local artists and labels. One of the things we've been very focused on is this 'glocalisation' effect. That speaks volumes to us because it mirrors our strategy exactly. The ability for artists and labels to have success in their local markets is a trend that's only going to accelerate. We have the ability to globalise music and globalise artists, but our key area is focusing on local music for local artists."

Believe's results highlighted that increasing impact of domestic repertoire in their home markets. What does this mean for a territory like the UK, which has always been a successful exporter?

"It's a complicated one, because where we have amazing strength in local artists in certain territories, it's because the domestic consumption of that music is so high. In the UK, actually, it's unique. We're quite a big import

PHOTOS: Will Ireland, Magnus Arrevad

"AI isn't something that will come in and destroy everything the industry has built, but the onus is on us to work together"

ALEX KENNEDY

> “Hip-hop is an absolute megalith when it comes to global genres, the UK market is growing and we want to be all over it”
>
> **ALEX KENNEDY**

market, so that makes it slightly trickier for UK artists to dominate in the UK as much as Polish artists would do in Poland, for example. But the UK has always had very high export potential; a very healthy portion of our revenue comes from markets like the US or Australia where we share the same language. And where you’ve got the same language – especially for such a big market like America – I think the UK will remain quite unique in having a very decent export potential.”

So how can you help UK talent compete globally?
“The fact that we’ve got so many offices gives us brilliant coverage. Specifically in dance and electronic, we’ve built a distribution imprint called B:Electronic, which is essentially an imprint that helps labels like Cr2, Hospital and Rinse develop strategies to be able to globalise their music. Dance and electronic is growing at a fast rate, but it is a very global genre and has the potential to export massively. Having that global structure, both generally but also specifically for dance/electronic, is allowing us to really grow people’s catalogues and campaigns.”

Are there other genres Believe is targeting for growth?
“Hip-hop is a big one for us. We’ve made some amazing signings on the artist services roster and hip-hop, generally, is where we want to focus across both our distribution and our artist services wings. I saw a stat recently that said nearly a quarter of all [streams] on Spotify [in 2023] are hip-hop. It’s an absolute megalith when it comes to global genres and the UK market is increasing as well. We want to be all over it.”

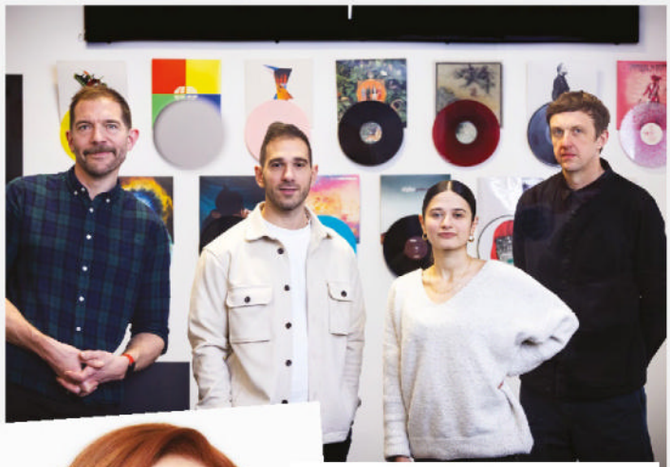
What’s the biggest challenge you’ve come up against so far?
“Bringing people up to speed with the commensurate size and success of Believe, because that has involved having to talk to a lot of people and that has been a time and labour-intensive effort. I had the luxury of being able to focus on those areas while I had people like Ben, Malena and Panos run the core business, and my mistake was probably not to get deeper into the core offering earlier on. But that’s now where I’m really focused and making sure that together, we’re building a strategy.”

Why is being independent important to you?
“I don’t want to make it as binary as the majors against the independents, I think it’s a bit of a trope. The people working at majors are every bit as in love with music and helping artists and labels as we are. Independence, however, is key for me and for us as a business. To have an offering for both artists and labels that has global scale and can compete against the majors is a critical, because that idea of independence is incredibly strong in a massive cohort of artists and labels. It feels like that trend is becoming more pronounced and more and more people want to be able to own their own business and are looking for more of a services offering, as opposed to that all-encompassing, what you might call, traditional record deal. That’s where we can really compete, because we have that global scale. We’re in 55 countries now and we have nearly 2,000 employees.”

Do you think traditional labels will still exist in five to 10 years? Or will the model shift more to something like label services where artists and managers have greater control?
“I think they absolutely will exist. All you’re really seeing is a shift to a

more graduated service structure. At one end, you've got a TuneCore or another DIY platform like CD Baby where you keep 100% of your rights, but you get minimal, if any, services bar distribution to the DSPs. At the other end, you've got the traditional major or indie label deals. And then the middle ground is made up of a whole host of people offering different types of structures and services. It's just horses for courses really; different artists will require different teams and what I've seen is the management community taking on a lot more of the development burden. They bring [artists] up to a level where maybe it doesn't make sense value-wise for them to do a traditional deal anymore and so they want to work with services companies like us. But there are many cases where the artist wants a full-on, bells and whistles, major label-style service, and I don't think that's going to disappear fully in 10 years at all."

Is Believe UK perceived as it should be?
"I'd say we're still a little way off. Winning the Music Week Award and doing interviews like this help get the message across, but I would like us to be known as the most artist and label-friendly business in the UK. If you look at the types of deals that we do, and the length of tenure that we keep our clients, that premium artist-friendly offering and label-friendly offering is the core of it – and that's what I really want us to be known for."



At your service: *(L-R) Believe's Alex Kennedy, Panos Polimatidis and Graham Luckhurst with (second from right) Rinse label manager Marva Kreel, plus Katy B and Knucks*

Why is Believe so bullish about AI being a net positive for the industry?
"As a business, digital and technological innovation has been the core of our DNA since we started and I think Denis [Ladegaillerie] is absolutely right when he says that generative AI – and AI in general – is an opportunity for the music industry. But as people who represent rights, we need to be incredibly responsible. We've got four key areas when it comes to AI – consent being one of them. Control is number two – making sure that any of the outputs that come out of any testing or learning that we're doing on the AI front is directly associated with the artists and label copyrights that we represent. The third one is making sure that if our artists and labels are participating in any monetisation opportunities, they're getting a commensurate remuneration. And finally, transparency – making sure that we're signposting anything we're doing from day one. We're trying to make sure we're ultra clear about how we're approaching this. TuneCore recently surveyed their artists to see what their views on AI were, and they're mixed. It was mainly positive, but there's definitely some trepidation and I think we need to be super-sensitive around that."

Do you perhaps benefit from being a newer entrant into the business while older companies may be worried about their catalogues being financially degraded by AI?
"Possibly, but I think we should all be looking at it as an opportunity. The music industry is generally in a much better place than we have been in the past when it comes to technological disintermediation. We have our house in order a lot better and the relationships that we have with the DSPs are such that this isn't going to be something that comes in and destroys everything that everybody's built. If we deal with it correctly, this is going to be something additive – the onus is on us to work together."

How will AI increase efficiencies for labels and creativity for artists?
"Again, there's a myriad of ways that it's going to help. It's going to mean that artists who might not be classically trained in certain instruments are able to have help to build songs. We tend to look at it from a, 'What's it going to do for artists?' side, but the business side is fascinating as well if you think about a levelling of the playing field. I think there will be a bit of a democratisation of some of those outputs, which can only be good for the industry in general."

How important is the connection between TuneCore and Believe as an A&R resource?
"Very, very important – and that was the [idea] when acquiring the business. We've been building dashboards behind the scenes to make sure that we're able to jump on any artists on TuneCore that are moving up. The heads of TuneCore in each territory are very much involved in the A&R process of the main Believe team to make sure that we're telling the story and capturing the right artists. In the UK, we've got several high-profile artists that use TuneCore like Conor Maynard and Cleo Sol."

What are your publishing ambitions following the Sentric acquisition?
"We're building the integration behind the scenes at the moment and will be able to talk about what we're doing later. But the general ethos is that the acceleration of the publishing market digitally presents us with an attractive opportunity. If you look at what we've done on the artist and label front – and the scale that we've got now – and think about Sentric being a very complementary and innovative business on the publishing side, we're very confident we're going to have success with that."

Where do you want to take Believe next?
"I think we're in a very good place in terms of the signings that we've made, both for artist services and some amazing labels. The next stage for us is absolutely to focus on those, but bring a third pillar to our focus and that's going to be entrepreneurs. One of the shifts we've noticed is that there's a huge amount of executive talent out there who want to build and own their own businesses and assets. We're probably uniquely placed to partner with them and help build the operational side of their business so they can focus on the creative, A&R and marketing side. All being well, you'll see some interesting announcements from us on that third pillar over the next 12 months."

Do you see yourself staying at Believe for the long haul?
"For the last five to eight years, I've been quite transient and without being cheesy, this is the role I've been steering towards that encompasses so many different elements. I've worked in sync. I've worked in music licensing. I've worked in e-commerce, management, and this is the intersection of all of those areas. That variety and the level that I get to operate at is just perfect. This is a very, very long-term thing for me. I want to be here until I'm old and grey, which, looking at me, isn't too far off at the moment!"

Given how your rugby career ended, do you have any regrets about the way things turned out?
"I often think of a quote by a philosopher called Søren Kierkegaard who said, 'Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.' I've made loads of mistakes along the way, or been in jobs where I thought, 'Oh god, what am I doing?' But looking backwards on those jobs now, I don't see them as mistakes, I see them as part of the journey. I'm quite a philosophical character and I'm in love with this current role – it is the culmination of all those other jobs. So I'd say I've made a lot of mistakes along the way, but I think those mistakes have put me into a great position now."

PHOTO: Magnus Arrevad

CURATED BY GIR'S CARLA MARIE WILLIAMS

MUSIC WEEK X GIRLS I RATE PRESENTS

MENTOR ME

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL AND SUCCESSFUL WOMEN ACROSS THE MUSIC AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SHARE THEIR TOP 5 CAREER LESSONS...

NOVA WAV (SONGWRITERS/PRODUCERS)

Meet Brittany 'Chi' Coney and Denisia 'Blu June' Andrews, AKA the award-winning production and songwriting duo Nova Wav. Throughout their career, Nova Wav have written and produced for global stars including Beyoncé, Rihanna, Jay-Z, Ariana Grande and Nicki Minaj, to name a few. The pair featured on Revolt's Nine Top Producers Of 2019 list, while in 2020 they worked on Grammy Award-winning tracks such as Beyoncé's Black Parade and Jazmine Sullivan's Pick Up Your Feelings. And their hot streak continues. In 2022, they co-wrote and co-produced Beyoncé's critically acclaimed album Renaissance, which won four Grammys, and secured five other nominations at the ceremony, including Album Of The Year. Here, they share their top tips on how to succeed in the music industry...

BRITTANY 'CHI' CONEY

1. Be braver, sooner

"This is something that I learned from Teresa LaBarbera Whites, who was part of discovering Beyoncé. In an interview, she said she wished she had been braver sooner. I think that's a huge thing, because the reason that most people don't accomplish their dreams is fear. If you take action in the moment, most of the time it's going to work out for you."

2. Focus on yourself

"As a female producer, I got a lot of 'Nos', which made me second guess my talent. But the people saying 'No' couldn't even do what I'm doing, so [I'd ask myself], 'Why am I listening to them?' Believe in yourself and focus on your craft. You don't need to care about what other people are saying about you. There's a biblical principle that goes, 'As a man thinks, so is he', which means that when you take in people's thoughts, you emanate what they think about you. But if you give those beliefs back to those people and just concentrate on the work you're doing, the possibilities are endless."

3. Find your own sound

"As far as finding your sound, do the things that you gravitate towards. If it's piano, if there's a chord structure that makes you feel a type of way every single time that you play it or there's an inflection in your voice that makes you feel like you've got power every single time you do it, stick with those things. Stick to the things that you actually like and perfect them. But don't be afraid to borrow from what's going on in the world."

4. Don't overthink it

"When we judge ourselves while being creative, that can stop our creativity. Just start creating, start writing the music, don't think about things like how many plugins a track needs, or whether it sounds right, literally just go for it. Then you can go back and correct the sound, and that's when you can ask, 'Is this the right key?' or, 'Is this kick [drum] right?' Critique it after you've got the creativity out."

5. Always be prepared

"One way to make sure you're always ready to make a hit is to be prepared. Always have something in the [back of your mind], one track, one line, one melody idea, something! If you feel prepared, your energy will feel a lot better, especially if you're not somebody who can just 'turn it on' in the moment. Always have something ready to go, and take on as much responsibility as you can. You can have a lot of other people around to help you, but you're the one who still has to go in and do the work. Nobody is going to save you, you have to look after yourself, so be prepared."

DENISIA 'BLU JUNE' ANDREWS

1. Self-care is important

"Be loyal to yourself before you're loyal to anyone else. I think, as women, the word 'loyal' is difficult, because it can feel like it's something we have to be. But honouring your values, morals and taking care of yourself in a holistic way, before you look after anyone else, allows you to reach your greatest potential."

2. Don't force it

"Some days you'll be on and some days you'll be off. If you realise that you're giving everything you can give, but something isn't working, you just have to be okay with that. People are going to put pressure on you and they're going to need [songs] from you, and when Chi and I used to get caught up in that it made us very unhappy, because all you have is your best. You have to learn to be human – that's the law of the land!"

3. Find the right partner

"When looking for a publisher, make sure you find somebody that you can have a partnership with. Look for someone who works hard and who is fair. And look at their stats, how they move, who they've had on their roster, what records they've had on the charts, what writers and producers they have, if [they have] anyone you want to work with. You might be a songwriter that writes pop songs, but this publisher might be on the urban side, so you might not get in their books and feel kind of ostracised. It's the little things like that you have to look at. Find somebody that wants to enter a partnership, and as long as you do the work, they will give back."

4. Collaboration is key

"As a creator, you meet and collaborate with a lot of people, but you don't always meet people who have the same values, or have your back 1,000%. When you come into this business and have someone who has your back, it makes the journey a lot easier, so I would tell everybody to have a partner in the music industry. I feel like a lot of people would make it a lot sooner and it would be a hell of a lot easier. Chi and I have faced high highs and dark lows together, and we have stood by each other no matter what. That's how you can gain trust and how you get results."

5. Compile your work

"When we wrote songs five years ago we would have thought, 'This is the best shit ever!', but when I go back and listen to the songs now I can hear what I like and what I would change, because I've got so much better. When you compile your work you can see your growth, so just get your ideas down. It's all practice, as you get better you can go back and you can do an assessment to say, 'Oh, this is how much I've grown.'"

INTERVIEW: Miranda Bardsley **PHOTO:** Eyemjonarthur

"Find a partner in this industry – we've faced high highs and dark lows together, but we stand by each other no matter what"

Denisia 'Blu June' Andrews

"The reason most people don't accomplish their dreams is fear"

Brittany 'Chi' Coney

Sign up to Girls I Rate to join their virtual mentoring sessions which take place on the first Sunday of every month

www.girlsIrate.com

Insights and sound:
Muyiwa Awoniyi

TH T

"We are nothing like the West in our cultural mindset and if you don't remember that, you're going to lead your artists astray"
MUYIWA AWONIYI

E INSIGHT RACK

As the co-manager behind **Tems**, **Muyiwa Awoniyi** is at the centre of one of the most exciting artist breakthrough stories of recent times, but he wants his industry impact to extend far beyond that. Here, in the wake of his **Insights** conference brand's star-studded UK launch, the Nigerian executive tells his story so far, holds court on the boom in African music and talks about handling imposter syndrome...

WORDS: ADENIKE ADENITIRE **PHOTOS:** LOUISE HAYWOOD-SCHIEFER

Whenever a once-in-a-lifetime artist comes along, it's often the case that the key players involved in their journey behind the scenes are just as interesting as the stars themselves. For Nigerian Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Tems, one of the most exciting global talents to emerge in recent years, manager Muyiwa Awoniyi certainly fits that description.

Alongside his co-founder at BSB Management, Wale Davis, he has showcased his skills as a music industry visionary, becoming one of the key faces behind the exhilarating explosion of music and culture coming out of Africa right now. Wizkid collaboration Essence (which has 762,770 sales to date, according to the Official Charts Company) put Tems – who is yet to release her debut album – centre stage in 2020, and was followed by a Grammy win for Wait For U (766,965 sales), with Future and Drake, this year.

Having come to the UK from his native Nigeria to study as a teen, self-professed "people-person" Awoniyi comes across as extremely balanced for someone who in his words is the "custodian" of one of the biggest new artists in the world. His Christian faith, which he constantly credits for his success, very humble beginnings and some painful past career knocks can all be cited as contributing factors.

Awoniyi is a likeable character, animated and passionate with lots of stories. During a typically hectic day, his interview with *Music Week* is peppered with recollections of memorable interactions with some of the biggest artists in the world. For example, the first time he met Drake, the Canadian superstar asked a surprised Awoniyi whether he should jump on an unreleased Young Thug track, which triggered a serious case of imposter syndrome for the young exec.

"When you have a hit, it doesn't automatically mean you are seeing money immediately, but everybody knows your song and everyone wants to meet you," he says, recalling the Essence effect. "So many celebrities were in Tems' DMs wanting to meet her and there was a time when Drake came to meet us at an Airbnb we were staying at in LA. Very quickly, he was like, 'Yo, where you guys are staying is not making sense, so let me put you in another place.' So, Drake put us in our first ever mansion in LA, and that was another imposter-type thing because it's like, 'I'm in a huge-ass mansion, but I haven't actually got any money in my pockets right now!'"

Elsewhere, he cites a random chat with Chance The Rapper about the importance of investing in Africa as the possible spark that ignited Chance's December 2022 launch of the inaugural Black Star Line Festival in Ghana.

But his stories are engaging and interesting and you never feel like he is name-dropping for the sake of it. It's always to make a valid point, but what it also makes clear is that influential people in the business have a lot of time and respect for Awoniyi. Those who have known him since childhood might say he is just living up to the nickname that has stuck with him since then: 'Donawon'. It combines 'don', a slang word for boss, followed by the first four letters of his surname.

"Even though I was short, I had this aura that just commanded attention," he laughs, reminiscing about his days as a secondary school student at Adesoye College Offa in Kwara State, Nigeria.

And he is still commanding attention today, through his Leading Vibe radio show that broadcasts regularly on Apple Music, and even more so with his progressive industry conference platform, Insights, which serves as a conduit for education within the industry. Insights has been a runaway success so far, with three sold-out events in Nigeria, Ghana and London, despite only launching in December 2022.

The event brings together a cast of music industry A-listers to intimate town hall-style sessions where they share first-hand knowledge of navigating the music industry. The London event took place in June, with guest speakers including Dave, producer Jae5, Ms Banks, Tems, artist and Native co-founder TeeZee, CAA's Dan Rais and Alec Boateng, co-president of 0207 Def Jam.

"I have very close relationships with a lot of key people in the industry," Awoniyi smiles, with more than a little understatement. "Everybody lent their time for free, I mean, Dave flew in on the day from France and came straight there. That was humbling for me, but he's my brother."

Awoniyi has a great passion for his industry, as he makes clear throughout an enlightening conversation that takes in the evolution of his relationship with Tems, his take on the UK business and much more...

Let's start at the beginning. How did you cut through and make a name for yourself?

"I really started making a name for myself when I came over to the UK to do my A levels. Being away from my parents, I felt a sense of freedom and the boldness to try something new. I started a YouTube channel with my cousin, uploading comedy skits, which then progressed to throwing parties and running my own Dashiki business, which helped build contacts in various places. Then, while I was still at university in Nottingham, I was approached by an artist called Teflon who was looking for management. At the time, I didn't understand what that was, but I decided to try my hand. By that time I had built up a sort of network and that's one thing he saw in me, that I had the ability to galvanise people. Then I realised, 'Okay, this is something I like doing because I'm putting my skills to the test.' From there, I started to manage several other people, including a singer called Nonso Amadi, who was based in Canada and was making music on SoundCloud. We had a very good run, but in 2018 he called me and said he didn't want management anymore, so I took a bit of a break from the industry."

Don top of the world: *Muyiwa Awoniyi with (clockwise from top) Dave, Jae5 and Tems*

So how did you then meet Tems?

"After [my time with] Nonso, I started a video production company with a friend. Eventually, that led me to a situation where two producer friends, Sons Of Sonix [Ariana Grande, Stormzy], were flying down from LA to have a studio session in Lagos for the first time, and a bunch of artists were being brought to them. On the first day, I went to see them and it was such a cool vibe, but when I came back later the vibe was completely different, everyone was moody as hell. Then, one of my boys came out of the recording room, and he was like, 'Dude, we've been in a session with this girl, and she's just been saying 'no' to everything we've played.' When I heard that, I already knew this was an artist who knew exactly what she wanted. When they told me her name was Tems, I remembered her from when I used to look for artists to work with on SoundCloud. Back then, I came across one of her songs called Mr Rebel and fell in love with her voice. So I ended up talking to her and the conversation lasted two hours. Then, after about four months of friendship, one day she asked me to be her manager."

What sort of relationship do the two of you have now? Why does it work?

"We don't have an artist-manager relationship. She is more or less my sibling. It's like, 'This is a genuine family relationship and it's because we met when you were broke and I was broke.' We started together, so there's this full understanding of who we are. We also have common values."

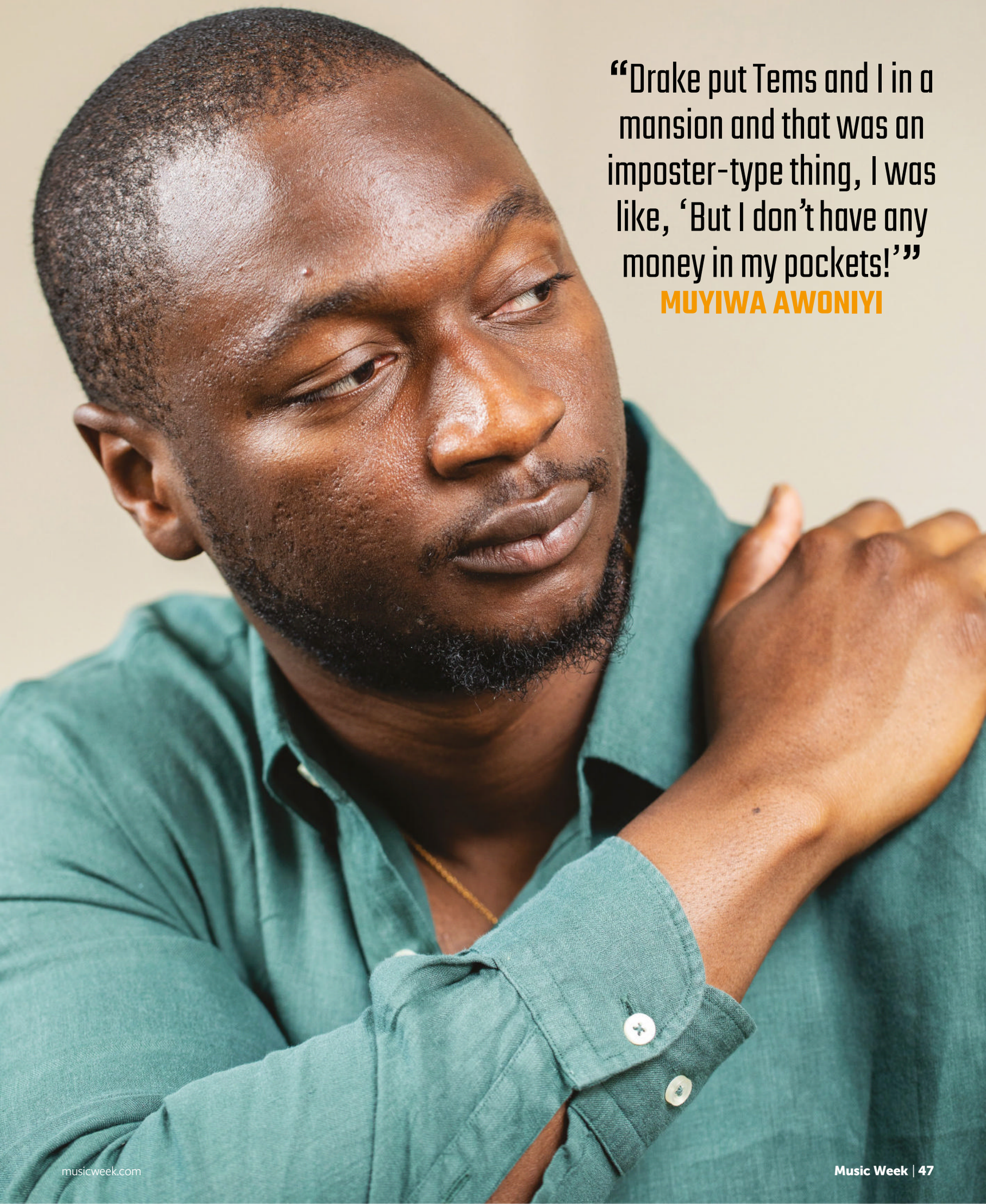
There was a situation where you both got arrested in Uganda for violating the country's Covid laws and were detained. Were you worried about her?

"At that point in time, I knew there was nothing I could do. But two things kept me in check. The first one was knowing God was with her and the second was thinking about how, over the past three years, I had worked to make sure that this girl's mind was fortified in a manner that she had the tools [to cope with the situation]. And that's exactly what happened. She ended up running the whole prison and was literally conducting praise and worship in there. She commanded that type of authority, that is rare and I feel privileged to be the custodian of this because it's real."

In the UK, Tems signed a deal with RCA/Since '93. What was it about the label that made you want to go that way?

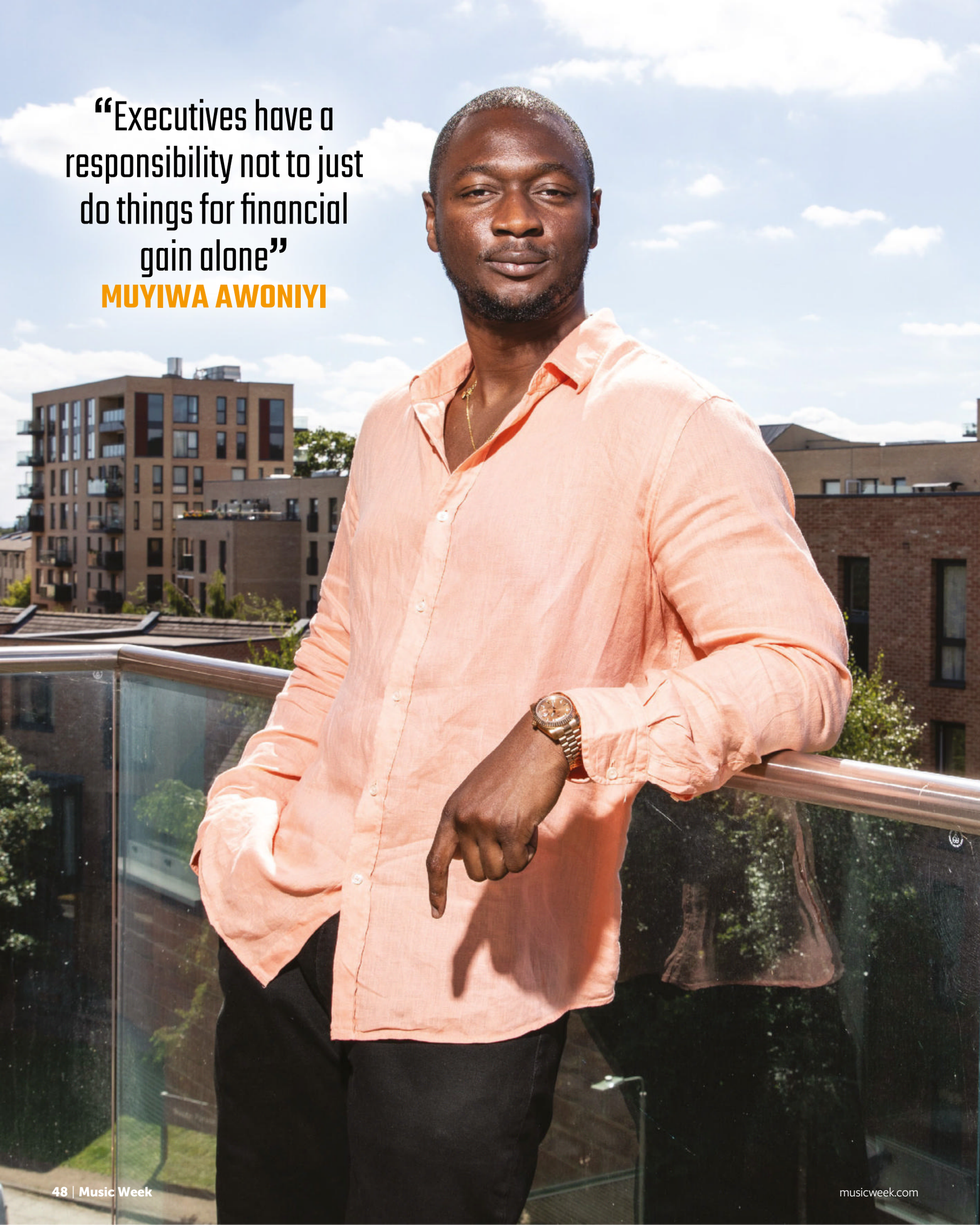
"Honestly speaking, it was Glyn [Aikins, RCA & Since '93 co-president], he really wanted us. I met him, and I really liked him, then I met Riki [Bleau, Since '93 co-president] in Ghana and after speaking to my partner Wale we decided to go with them. We also didn't want a label that had a lot of artists signed to it, you know, so that they could focus on us, but at the same time, what they've done and who they are makes sense. So far, it's been really good – I love Glyn and Riki, man."

PHOTOS: Zekaria Al-Bostani, Muyiwa Awoniyi



“Drake put Tems and I in a mansion and that was an imposter-type thing, I was like, ‘But I don’t have any money in my pockets!’”

MUYIWA AWONIYI


“Executives have a responsibility not to just do things for financial gain alone”
MUYIWA AWONIYI

In terms of your own career, were there any execs from Africa that you feel blazed a trail for you to follow?

"Tunde Balogun [co-founder, LVRN] and Tunji Balogun [CEO, Def Jam], who are now both friends of mine. Tunji was working at RCA when I came across him and Tunde was managing the artist 6Lack, he didn't have Summer Walker back then. Tunde is my very good friend. We're the same age, and he is just dominating Atlanta like crazy right now. And with Tunji, for me, his catalogue in music is insane. I mean, how do you work with Kendrick Lamar as an intern!? We worked together on the Black Panther trailer, and the relationship has carried on until today. Overall, I was just impressed that two Africans were doing things on such a large scale. In terms of back home in Nigeria, [Mavin Records founder] Don Jazzy is definitely somebody I respect and we have a good relationship. Another person I respect is Kenny Ogungbe, the founder of Kennis Music, [one of] the first ever record labels in Nigeria. He also started one of the first radio stations in the country. He bought through so many of the popular veteran artists such as Daddy Showkey, Baba Fryo and Tuface, and flew 40 artists to the UK. He is a legend who should be spoken about."

Insights for sore eyes: *Muyiwa Awoniyi holds court (top) and meets attendees (bottom) at Insights London*

What responsibilities do you believe music executives have to the artists that they work alongside?

"Firstly, to retain the quality of the music. The responsibility is not just doing things because of financial gain alone, that's only part of it as good things still sell. The second thing is retaining the authenticity of the craft, you know? It's not just about working with every popping artist. It's better to focus on building a fanbase with collaborations and partnerships that actually push them. I mean, when I tell people Tems hasn't released music for two years, they're like, 'Huh?' But it's because of the potency of our work, so it doesn't seem that way."

The line-up for the UK edition of Insights gathered some big names, many of whom are connected to the boom in African music and culture. Does that show how interconnected and supportive the scene is?

"It's definitely supportive and I wouldn't say there's division from the standpoint of the industry, it's just some fans who seem to subscribe to the individual more than the collective. If you're an artist and you feed into that, that's where you have a problem. For example, I'm not really close to Burna Boy's camp, but whenever we see each other it's fantastic and we have a great rapport. Tems and Burna both performed at the NBA AllStars show not long ago, and when he saw us, he was like, 'Yo, I'm having a party, please come,' you know? Then there are other people like Wizkid that we have closer relationships with where we talk about the deeper things in life."

You've said you started Insights to highlight the importance of "retaining ownership of the cultural renaissance" in African music. How can the continent ensure that the more established music industries in the UK and US don't wield their influence in the wrong way?

"It's about authenticity and potency, because as cool as it is to be African right now, I don't think Africans have fully defined what it means to be African. Yeah, we value things that the West values, but we are nothing like the West in our cultural mindsets and upbringing, and if you don't remember that as a custodian in this industry, you're going to lead the artists you work with astray. It will be just a matter of time before they start chasing charts and streams and forget that it's very important to be an individual. The main thing is really orientating the mindset of the stakeholders in the industry, which is what Insights is about and which is why I also bring my friends on board. All my friends have been so kind to just do it for free. I think education is the difference between rich and poor. Through knowledge you can show you have value, and through value you can attract people."

How do you see the situation on the ground in Africa now in terms of emerging music companies and talent?

"It's very tough, because I can't really tell you that I know specific people. But in terms of movements, in Ghana, for example, there's this movement called Free The Youth, which I think is amazing in terms of aligning with the culture from a fashion standpoint. I think already-established platforms such as Culture Custodians and my radio show Leading Vibes are giving a platform to up-and-coming artists, giving them an opportunity to educate themselves so they can add to what they do and eventually get noticed."

Do you feel like there's enough being done to ensure that African writers and producers are coming through at the same level as the artists are?

"I think so. For example, now we have Sony Music Publishing in Nigeria and from that standpoint things are being done. An executive called Godwin Tom has started the MBA [Music Business Academy] for Africa, and one of the things he's doing is educating songwriters and producers on how to align from the standpoint of getting their songs chosen, because he works with music publishing. My co-manager Wale also works at Sony Music Publishing, so we do have people on the ground that work for these big corporations who are looking for producers and songwriters to sign. But it's really about people putting themselves out there to be seen. One thing I've found is when people tell me that they do music and I ask them when they last released anything, they're like, 'Er, er....' But without releasing anything, nobody knows you."

What are your biggest frustrations with the music industry?

"Funnily enough, it's not even the industry, it's people who are not in it having opinions on it. For me, it's like a child talking about marriage. It's like, you just see trinkets and you think you have a well-balanced constructive opinion as to what you're seeing, but you have no idea. Those things are very detrimental to the mind frame of the artist. It's the reason why Davido and Wizkid [allegedly] fought the first time [in Dubai in 2017]. If the fans didn't push agendas, maybe they would have had a song out together by now. So that's my frustration, I call them the cancerous fanatics. They're like trolls, basically. Outside of that, I don't have any other real frustrations personally, everything else is there to build character."

Finally, what would you like your legacy to be?

"I don't know if I can speak on that. I'm not here to attain anything, I'm here to make people understand that there is a way to salvation that has nothing to do with the world. And it's really about alignment with Jesus Christ. So I am that vessel in this industry. I'm unapologetic about pushing that narrative because I know what he's done for my life."

PHOTOS: Insights

THE POWE

Hiroki Shirasuka and **Tiger Hagino Reid** are on a mission to make a difference for the East and Southeast Asian music community in the UK. Two years ago, they launched **ESEA Music**, which now boasts more than 300 members, including artists like **Rina Sawayama** alongside executives from across the business. *Music Week* meets the pair to hear their vital message for the industry...

WORDS: JAMES HANLEY
PHOTOS: KENNETH LIEW

The Stop Asian Hate movement was a reaction to the sharp increase in anti-Asian discrimination and violence fuelled by the coronavirus pandemic. It was against this backdrop that British-Japanese music industry executive Tiger Hagino Reid was compelled to make a difference for the East and Southeast Asian (ESEA) music community in the UK.

Reid, who led global album campaigns for artists such as Adele, Kamasi Washington, The xx and FKA Twigs during around a decade with Beggars Group and XL Recordings, was compelled to act.

"It was still in the Covid era and there had been a lot of stuff happening in the UK and the US around the Stop Asian Hate movement – and that movement was born from all that was happening around Black Lives Matter as well," says Reid, who is based in London and now works in artist management. "I was seeing the acronym ESEA being used a lot more broadly within activism circles in the UK, so I was thinking about what we could do in the music industry. When Black Out Tuesday happened, it was a quick realisation that I wasn't the same as your next white person and that was quite a reckoning for me personally."

Contacting Giant Artist Management co-founder Hiroki Shirasuka, Reid shared her vision for ESEA Music – a collective which aims to provide better representation for ESEA people based in the UK music industry – and realised she'd hit upon the crux of the problem.

"Hiroki was the only other person I really knew who was East Southeast Asian in the UK music industry, and that struck me as quite shocking, because I'd been working in music for over 15 years," says Reid.

Receptive to her plan, Shirasuka helped Reid to flesh out the idea. Drawing up a spreadsheet of 10 British ESEA music professionals, they called a meeting and established ESEA Music in September 2021.

Two-and-a-half years later, it has swelled to more than 300 members at companies including Universal Music, Sony Music, Warner Music, Spotify, Apple Music, TikTok, BBC, PIAS, Warp, 4AD, AWAL, Bella Union, Ninja Tune, Tap Music and Eastern Margins. Artist members include Rina Sawayama, Congee, Yunè Pinku, Lucy Tun, Lucinda Chua, Andrew Hung and Emmy The Great.

"As soon as we had our first meet-up, it became quite apparent there were more of us, and those meet-ups have grown and grown," reports Reid. "It was just a small idea that came from outside of the music industry and the

Community spirit: *ESEA Music founders Hiroki Shirasuka (left) and Tiger Hagino Reid*

ER OF TWO

> "After 15 years in music, I only knew one other ESEA person in the industry, which is shocking"
>
> **TIGER HAGINO REID**

kind of general mood of the time, but it built up quite organically from there. We've learned from the people in the group about what it is that we need."

Shirasuka, whose company works with acts such as Actress, MJ Cole, Mount Kimbie, Crystal Fighters and Deerhunter, agrees.

"Once we started to do the meet-ups, it felt needed and urgent," he says. "The momentum from the first meet-up of 10 people has led us to consistently having over 100 people at our now bi-monthly meet-ups. And there's quite a lot to be said about how much it means to all of us on a personal level and just how supportive everybody is to each other. I'm witnessing so many new relationships, artists and executives or professionals coming together. It is actually astonishing seeing all that in action."

Reid is similarly moved by what they have created.

"A few years ago, if you were Asian or ESEA, you might not have reached out to another person in the music industry based on your identity," she says. "I've known Hiroki for a long time. We're both Japanese, but building this network where I can speak to somebody who works at Secretly Canadian, Beggars or wherever, and have these conversations within the industry feels good and right and has been missing. You don't know what you don't have until it's there."

Reid established her own company, Tiger Projects, at the start of 2022, working as an artist manager and specialising in strategy and creative. Her roster includes Rina Sawayama, Bat For Lashes, Yaeji, Lucinda Chua, Tohji and record label Eastern Margins. The first ESEA representative on UK Music's diversity taskforce, she also works as head of campaign strategy for Giant Artist Management.

"In forming this group and in the conversations that are now happening, I think there is a lot more nuance and understanding of how to work with East and Southeast Asian artists and also how to work with Asia," she opines. "I used to work in Japan and there'd be this idea that a Western artist could be big in Japan, but not the other way around."

Reid suggests that even as recently as five years ago, "No one would have asked to have an ESEA or an Asian member on their team," but that is changing thanks to the formation of the group.

“Rina Sawayama is doing an incredible job of speaking out and taking huge risks”

TIGER HAGINO REID

"It's important to have people who look like you and understand your experiences – whatever culture that might be – on your team," she says. "And I think that has massively changed in the last few years."

Shirasuka adds that while he and Reid are the ones fronting it, there are plenty of unsung heroes chipping in behind the scenes.

"There are tens and tens of people volunteering their valuable time to activations and initiatives going on at ESEA Music, it's a communal effort," he stresses. "I guess Tiger and I felt that something like this should exist and that's what we did, but from that point onwards, it's been all about community."

Prior to ESEA Music's formation, Reid and Shirasuka would frequently find themselves the only ESEA people in the room. And while the organisation has made great strides in its short lifespan, the pair are under no illusions about the scale of the task at hand.

"I ask people how many ESEA artists they can name in the UK, and there are only a handful that are mainstream – Rina, Jax Jones, Beabadoobee and Griff," notes Reid. "I'm 40 and Hiroki and I are two of the most senior [ESEA] people. We noticed when we brought the group together, the oldest people are 43 or 44 and that was astounding to me as well, so everything we want to do is from the grassroots up. Lifting it all up from the bottom is the main objective."

Taking action: *ESEA Music and Sony Music's meet-up (top) and the group's pop writing camp (bottom)*

Inspiration was taken from the mobilisation of groups such as the Black Music Coalition and Shesaid.so within a similar timeframe.

"We were really inspired by what they were doing and the collective voice that they were able to gather through the music industry in that moment," says Reid.

"I think the Black Music Coalition is fantastic and it's great to see so much great work coming from what they do," says Shirasuka. "With the Black Lives Matter movement, there was the feeling that it triggered this moment of reckoning where I think everybody, not just the industry, but the world, recognised that things have to change."

While the co-founders come from independent music backgrounds, Reid is complimentary of the support they have received to date. Universal Music hosted the eighth ESEA Music Meet-Up and the group has also worked with the likes of Sony Music and Spotify.

"The fact they've been very open to us having meet-ups there is a really good start for us and the start of building relationships with us," she says of the ESEA's relationships with the major music companies. "At Sony, Stacey Tang, who is the co-president of RCA, has been a massive supporter from day one. She did a talk at the Spotify meet-up we had, mentioned ESEA Music in her [social media] post when she got promoted at RCA and she is a really active member. Stacey has been amazing."

In May, ESEA Music initiated a progress report, launching Reorientated – An ESEA Music Survey, to find out how its 300+ members were feeling about the industry in terms of their ethnicity. The organisation conducted the survey in collaboration with design agency 100 Kicks.

> "We realised that younger artists and executives need help, so the more senior ones are doing the best we can"
> **HIROKI SHIRASUKA**

"It is full of testimonials about the real life, lived experiences of ESEA people in the music industry," explains Reid. "We felt that giving a voice and a platform to people to put out these testimonials anonymously would be useful and it's just never been done before. We wanted the experience of people taking the survey to be very open and calm and inclusive, so we didn't ask any particularly digging questions, we asked them to take their time. As a result, people wrote long sentences and a lot of the headline takeaways were about the lack of representation."

In response to how well represented they felt in their ethnicity within the business, on a scale of one to 10 (with one being no representation and 10 being great representation), the community answered "four". Of the musicians surveyed, only 24.5% are full-time artists and 45.3% are funding their music career with an unrelated job. When asked how much their music was connected to their identity, 58.5% said they were "very connected", 32.1% felt "somewhat connected" and 9.4% felt "not connected at all".

The full results are being published to coincide with ESEA Heritage Month in September in a bid to help others better understand the experiences of ESEA people in the UK industry.

Rather than share specific examples of discrimination against ESEA professionals within the business, Reid says she considers the subject "very nuanced" with "a lot of microaggressions". She points to the model minority myth, a sociological phenomenon that stereotypes certain minority groups, which generalises East and Southeast Asian people as part of the "immigrant success story", emphasising stereotypes such as "hardworking, studious, and apolitical".

Reid, who is writing a dissertation for an MA in culture, diaspora and ethnicity at Birkbeck University, explains how the myth constructs and positions ESEA people as the model minority in relation to other groups.

"In terms of barriers, there is a model minority myth," she says. "It's this myth that pits us against other groups and says that we're palatable, in so much as we're good, we listen, we're apolitical and we're non-creative. These are all very obvious stereotypes and that is something that I've experienced and seen as being a bit of a barrier."

ESEA Music sprung into action earlier this year in the wake of Matty Healy's controversial appearance on an episode of The

Adam Friedland Show podcast, in which The 1975 frontman was heard laughing along with the hosts' mocking imitations of Chinese and Hawaiian accents and comments about rapper Ice Spice's ethnicity.

"Hearing the mimicry of stereotypical Asian accents prompts an all too familiar feeling, one we had relegated to the racist taunts and mockery of 'Asian' accents from the schoolyard bullies of the past," read the statement from ESEA Music. "We do not accept the normalisation of anti-Asian sentiment and racist, unfunny jokes at our expense."

Rina Sawayama later criticised Healy when introducing her track STFU! during her Glastonbury set ("I wrote this next song because I was sick and tired of microaggressions"), and appeared to aim another jab at the singer during her performance at Portugal's NOS Alive the following month ("Why don't you apologise for once in your life without making it about your fucking self?").

Reid is wary of generating further headlines where Healy is concerned, but expresses ESEA's Music's "solidarity" with Sawayama.

"I think Rina's doing an incredible job of speaking out and taking huge risks," she says. "It's very difficult to talk out about stuff, so we are hugely supportive of anybody who is doing that."

The duo suggest that the ESEA's response to the incident highlights the power of the collective.

"Three years ago, it would have just been a discussion between people, but now we have a collective voice," says Reid. "We're proud that we put out a statement."

"I think that is a really important takeaway," adds Shirasuka. "ESEA Music has provided a collective voice for the community and allowed people to speak up and bring matters forward – not just specifically in this case, but generally – and hopefully we're able to empower our community to be able to do that more so than before."

And the organisation will speak up again as it sees fit.

"ESEA Music condemns all forms of racism and we support our community – artists and industry executives," says Shirasuka. "And as a side note, Rina Sawayama is an inspiration to us all. She's just incredible."

Taking place this month, the third ESEA Heritage Month – a four-week, collaborative programme of events – is run by community organisers Besea.nm with this year's Roots/Routes theme promising to explore "cultural identity and belonging".

"ESEA Heritage Month is a relatively new celebration of East and Southeast Asian culture," divulges Shirasuka. "It's becoming a landmark period for the communities, not just in music but in the wider sense, to celebrate ESEA culture and it's a real coming together moment for us and we're trying to focus a lot of our activations around it so we can amplify and bring in partners."

One such example is a partnership between ESEA Music and global artist services company Platoon on a writing camp programme, She Runs The Board, which connects developing female artists with established female producers, songwriters and engineers.

"The biggest takeaway for me with that is that corporations and outside organisations are recognising ESEA culture, especially around ESEA Heritage Month," says Shirasuka.

ESEA Music previously held a successful writing camp for over 30 participating artists in May this year, which showcased the diverse talents of the ESEA music community.

It has also recently launched the Sesame Mentorship Scheme, the first mentorship initiative created specifically for East and South East Asian artists and professionals within the UK music industry. The team is led by Lucinda Tse Hall (BMG) and Rob Chung (Fuga).

"That has been an amazing experience for the community," enthuses Shirasuka. "There have been some amazing people from the group volunteer and put their time into creating this mentorship scheme. We realised that younger artists and executives need help, and the more senior ones are doing the best we can to help pull up the younger generation."

He stresses that building for the future is one of their key objectives.

"One of our missions is to create this community where the next generation is more supported than the previous generation, so therefore the mentorship scheme is one of the [main] activations we're doing this year," says the exec. "Generally, we have been getting positive responses from the industry and the outside community at large. This community is starting to become more recognised and there is a huge shift towards more visibility and acceptance for ESEA artists and executives across the board."

Reid also believes that, slow or not, change is occurring.

"Some of these companies have been going for so long, they're not just going to have changed in the last five years with what's happened," she says. "I think it's moving but it's slow."

"We hope that the industry will continue to evolve to be more inclusive, but one thing that we can do is empower our community," reckons Shirasuka. "If we're able to empower the individuals, the artists, the executives, hopefully we can create change through that as well."

Moreover, the continued success of ESEA artists and executives should have positive consequences on its own, concludes Reid.

"If one East Southeast Asian person in their 30s decides to stay [in music] because they feel more supported and becomes a senior, like the Stacey Tangs and the Rinas, it will naturally bring change," she says. "It's that classic thing, 'You can't be what you can't see.' And I think we need more artists that are ESEA. We need more executives high up that are ESEA. We want to engage with the wider industry more, not only to partner with them, but to fit ESEA into the wider conversations around cultural diversity because we're still relatively new in those spaces."

"And we welcome these discussions," finishes Shirasuka. "We invite the industry to reach out to us..."

Fighting for change: *ESEA Music's pop writing camp (top) and an ESEA Music x Spotify show (bottom)*

“ESEA Music has provided a collective voice, hopefully we can empower people to speak up more than before”

HIROKI SHIRASUKA

TALKIN

It may not steal all the headlines, but the **independent retail sector** is essential to preserving the health of the wider music industry. To take stock before the Q4 rush begins, *Music Week* gathers key players from **Banquet**, **Crash**, **Drift** and **Rough Trade**, plus **ERA**'s **Kim Bayley**, for a discussion that takes in emerging talent, **Record Store Day** and the realities of running a shop in 2023...

WORDS: JAMES HANLEY

As the plaudits for Elton John's already legendary Glastonbury swansong this summer rolled in, the kindest words were reserved for the leg-up the Rocket Man gave to rising talent. Jacob Lusk of Gabriels, Stephen Sanchez and Rina Sawayama each got to share in the spotlight on the biggest stage, and the reflected glory stretched right across the music food chain.

"It's very hard to work out our place when Glastonbury happens because everything seems so fucking huge," Jon Tolley, owner of Kingston independent record shop Banquet Records, tells *Music Week*. "We put on gigs by some of the biggest artists in the country and they're nothing like that. But at the same time it inspires you, because I saw Rina Sawayama on TV with Elton John, and the last time I had seen her she was in our office signing copies of her record."

For Tolley, whose store has hosted many more of Glastonbury's 2023 standouts including Nova Twins, the gesture was a subtle but welcome reminder of indie retailers' contribution to the wider music business ecosystem.

"I think it's amazing how much us small minnows in the whole scheme are actually involved in helping these artists get to another level," he says. "I'm not saying we got Rina onto the main stage at Glastonbury at all, but we do have our place in it. We're not just doing obscure fringe music, we're doing some of the biggest artists – as are independent record shops across the country – and it's good to be able to see that what we're doing has its place in the whole industry."

Indeed, storied retail chain Rough Trade reported a surge in interest from fans looking to purchase music from artists they'd seen perform live at Worthy Farm. Entertainment Retailers Association (ERA) CEO Kim Bayley moves quickly to hail the sector's "remarkable" resilience, stressing that indie store owners operate "with pretty much no safety net".

"It's about their knowledge, their skills and the sheer energy to keep on keeping on," she says. "I feel tremendously proud to represent an incredible group of women and men who really do operate at the coalface of the music industry."

For Bayley, the community has much in common with other physical retailers in

Counter culture: *Nova Twins at Banquet Records in Kingston*

"It's amazing how much small minnows like us are involved in helping artists get bigger"

JON TOLLEY
BANQUET RECORDS

G SHOP

facing challenges from inflation, pressures on income and business rates.

"We need to ensure that record shops do not become collateral damage in these battles," she says. "Many of these issues are beyond the scope of the music business. To *Music Week*'s readers I would just say: Let's not make them worse. We understand that other parts of the supply chain are also facing inflationary pressures, but we would ask that labels remember that persuading fans to part with cash in the current climate is difficult. The danger is that once a fan is lost they are lost forever."

"Everything's a challenge because of the cost of living crisis," agrees Tolley. "That said, we're busy. We were up on last year at a time when we should be down, if you look at the headlines, so things are okay as it stands."

A campaign was launched in March 2020 to highlight the UK's independent record shops at the onset of the pandemic. Yet paradoxically, it turned out to be a fruitful period for many.

"It was a weird time," remembers Tolley. "I was going to say a tough time, but it wasn't actually because we immediately got busier with people having to stay at home and not really having an avenue to spend their money apart from on music. They couldn't go to pubs, couldn't go to football, couldn't go to gigs, so we found that people wanted to buy records."

Emily Waller, UK head of brand and content at Rough Trade, feels the same.

"Covid was incredibly busy," she says. "We saw a huge uplift in sales, primarily because people weren't purchasing tickets, so the next best way to support artists was buying their LP. We actually saw a massive spike in demand and for the most part we've retained that coming out of Covid, which has been brilliant."

The only caveat she includes is the well-documented vinyl pressing delays seen in the industry.

"The biggest challenge has been supply for that huge demand with the pressing plants delays," she says. "But for the most part we've kept that business healthy and we're just looking to expand it even more."

Up north, Scott Gamble of Leeds' Crash Records deems business to be "pretty busy" but suggests the pandemic has had a lasting effect on shopping habits, with over-the-counter sales never returning to pre-2020 levels.

"We are in a very busy city centre and a lot of people just didn't come back," he says. "A lot of offices didn't open so that's a lot of our midweek trade gone. And it's not necessarily turned into the old days of everyone coming in at the weekend. The little shops have just got to go where the money is and work as hard as they can to grab it, so pre-orders and online. Anything that can be done to drive traffic into our High Street is something that's on our minds. We wander around and see lots of big empty units. I think the government and local councils need to be doing what they can to encourage people back into these centres."

Down in Totnes at Drift Records, manager Rupert Morrison paints a considerably more pessimistic picture of the market. Morrison, who also runs independent record shop coalition Dinked with Natasha Youngs of Resident in Brighton, admits his concerns about the current state of affairs.

"I've come to the conclusion that there's a lot of bullshitting about where we're at," he opines. "I just try to be honest: people are poor and records are getting more and more expensive. I would be very cautious to be definitive or too gloomy, but it's a bad mix. We saw the recession – which we are definitely in – early."

PHOTO: Federica Burelli

Morrison says he noticed people spending less in spring last year.

"The old adage of your £50 man has become a £10 man," he says. "It's heartbreaking when you have regulars being almost apologetic about not spending money, when it's clear their mortgage has doubled, or they're in a flat with no gas so they're suddenly spending £500 a month on electricity."

Sensing the way the wind was blowing, Morrison was compelled to take the fairly drastic step of initiating a stock sale last October.

"We foresaw that we were going to end up being in a real cash flow situation if we didn't," he says. "It wasn't something that I liked, because selling any artist's work at a lower price always feels funny to me, but I guess that's the artistic side as opposed to the pragmatism of running a record shop. We got out in front of it, did a sale and reduced the stock a lot because I felt that we should be in a position where we were able to be more reactive."

The move would cause a ripple effect.

"Within about a week, pretty much every major independent record shop in the country did exactly the same thing," says Morrison. "But I don't think we press-ganged people into doing it by any means. We acted first and it had the desired impact on what we were able to do cash flow-wise."

Points of sale: *(Clockwise from top left) Kim Bayley, Rough Trade West on Record Store Day this year, Drift Records, Scott Gamble of Crash, Young Fathers play Rough Trade East*

Record Store Day continues to be a beacon for retailers, with around 250 UK stores participating in this year's edition back in April. RSD helped boost vinyl sales by 122%, while exclusive releases from The 1975 and Taylor Swift made the albums Top 5. Emily Waller says Rough Trade has always been a vocal supporter of the promotion.

"We love it," she says. "It's represented across all of our locations and it gets bigger every year. From a personal standpoint, I think the variety of what's on offer has maybe dipped a little bit in the last few years and it's not really affordable for grassroots and emerging artists to press records for that day specifically. But we make it about more than just the releases with events in our shops, and we make it a celebratory atmosphere with a line-up of bands through the day. Somebody might be stumbling in to buy a David Gray record, but see somebody amazing on the stage they wouldn't have otherwise been aware of, so it's great that we can offer that platform, support the industry and bring new fans into our stores."

Crash's Gamble is on the same page, insisting RSD's impact remains "absolutely humongous" for the sector.

"This year was the first where we'd had rain overnight, but we still had a queue right down the street and around the corner," he says. "It's a humongous day for all indies that are able to take part and it's vital not only as a cash injection, but for reminding the general public that we are here and to come and see us. We get renewed interest in the week leading up to it and the week after, so RSD is absolutely fantastic and I would argue heartily with anyone that has an opposing view."

Morrison, however, is a rare and outspoken critic of the event, going so far as to claim it is no longer "fit for purpose".

"I hate Record Store Day," he sighs. "I was one of its strongest advocates and we participated literally from day one. But you're talking about something that was designed 15 years ago and it hasn't changed. I'm probably Record Store Day's most vocal critic these days, but it is not fit for purpose. I think not only is it antiquated in terms of its business model, it's actually dangerous in terms of the expectation on shops to take stock."

> "It's as important for us to represent new talent as it is to stock a Taylor Swift record"
>
> EMILY WALLER
> ROUGH TRADE

Morrison adds that he often finds himself "trying to point out to people that it is not about what you actually do on the day" itself.

"Yes, I will do a month, two months' business in a day, but the sell-through is almost impossible to project because you are trying to fit two months' worth of releases into a day and you will have disasters," he explains. "Lots of people will say to me, 'Well, if you don't like it, just don't do it.' But that's such a ridiculous argument because if the whole sector is doing it and 500 different releases are being made under the mantle of Record Store Day, that will have a categoric effect on the release schedule of other records – in particular indie records."

His final thought on Record Store Day concerns the customers.

"From a customer point of view – and some shops will deny this – people stop buying records before Record Store Day," he says. "Everybody has a great month in April because of Record Store Day, but if you take that one day out, it is absolute carnage."

Conversely, Banquet's Tolley is relaxed on the subject.

"We don't have people queuing up overnight for our shop often, but we can guarantee it on Record Store Day, so I think it's good and important," he says. "It does dominate and it does take over everything that we and the pressing plants do, and it blocks up supply chains, of course it does, but so does Christmas. Halloween blocks up nightclubs,

PHOTOS: Peter Bartlett, James Potter, Crash Records

New Year's Eve blocks up pubs. But it's necessary otherwise we wouldn't be having this great big moment. Actually, right throughout the year, there are exclusives only available in record shops and I don't think that would have been happening had Record Store Day not created that pathway."

Naturally, Kim Bayley is even more fulsome in her praise, saying the ERA-helmed event "stands alongside the invention of streaming as a landmark moment for music" and became "the single most important catalyst" for the vinyl revival.

"Are there wrinkles in it? Are there challenges? Of course," she says. "That is why we tweak the day every year and take feedback from the entire industry as to ways to shape the day. But the big picture is that it has been and continues to be a resounding success."

Another major triumph has been the growth of in-store gigs, meet and greets and talks with artists around releases. Rough Trade are established masters of the craft, hosting dozens of live events every month.

"They're a huge source of revenue straight off the bat, and probably one of our most unique selling points," says Emily Waller. "Offering fans and customers that opportunity to see some of their favourite artists in a record shop environment – be that emerging bands or established acts – is really exciting and affordable. It's just the price of a CD or a vinyl LP that they possibly were going to buy anyway, and then you essentially see a gig for free off the back of that. We have gigs five, six times a week at our Rough Trade East shop, so it's really healthy."

Banquet, meanwhile, has featured a host of artists such as Gorillaz, Manic Street Preachers and Jeff Goldblum at Kingston's Pryzm venue. Elsewhere, Drift has organised gigs with the likes of Metronomy and Squid, while Crash staged a memorable night with Tom Jones at Leeds' Music Week Award-winning Brudenell Social Club and an intimate album show with Tom Grennan at Stylus.

"The meat and potatoes of it is putting on a big artist in a small venue outside of our store, which is linked in to customers buying an album and helping the artist with further chart sales," says Gamble. "We did about 100 events last year around that sort of premise."

The extent to which chart records still matter to indie retailers depends on who you talk to. Tolley certainly sounds nonplussed.

"To us, it doesn't matter if a band is going for No.1, No.40, or whether it has a barcode on it at all," he contends. "It's either about selling as many as we can on a pure business black and red level, or it's about promoting as much good music as we can. Obviously, there are areas where those cross over – and that's the best buzz of all."

On the other hand, Waller speaks of her pride at Rough Trade's role in Yard Act going straight in at No.2 with their 2022 debut LP The Overload.

"Our in-stores usually line up with the week of release, so they count to chart sales and obviously that's important to the majority of the labels that are running those shows with us," she notes. "But the main thing is that we are very proud to be part of an amazing chart story. With Yard Act, we were a huge part of their journey and had in-stores and an exclusive pressing. It was our album of the month and that was reflected in the chart."

Waller maintains that indie retailers serve a "hugely important" purpose as a "genuine and community-driven" access point.

"There are real people behind these stores, and they're all music fans," she enthuses. "And it is as important that we represent emerging talent and the next generation, as it is that we stock a Taylor Swift record. We want to maintain that DNA in our brand and hope people continue to support that."

"As long as physical is there, you need indie retailers to sell it," reckons Gamble. "Regardless of the greater public shifting towards streaming, customers always want some sort of physical media with music, even if people's mentality is slightly different – we are finding younger customers are seeing it more as a merch item."

Whatever his misgivings about the current state of play, Drift's Morrison is staying resolute in his belief that the sector is as "vital as it's ever been".

"What opportunities do emerging talent have outside of the independent physical sector?" he asks. "Look at Self Esteem: the reason that she's at the table – without taking ownership or diminishing her unbelievable work ethic – is that she was supported by the indie sector. In terms of discovery and growth of artists, it is absolutely essential."

"You could argue there's a lot to be worried about," adds Bayley. "But at the same time you have to trust your instincts and my instinct is that the resourcefulness of indies is hard to beat. Naturally at ERA we will do whatever we can to support our members, because the fact is, music needs indie record stores."

GET
PLAYED,
GET
PAID
In 2022, PPL collected
£272.6 million in the UK
and internationally, and
paid more than £165,000
performers and recording
rightsholders.
PPL
@ppluk ppluk.com

Royalty treatment: *PPL client Ellie Goulding and PRS member Cat Burns*

SPECIAL REPORT

A ROYALTY AFFAIR

In 2023, there are more questions surrounding royalties than ever before. With efficiency and transparency at the very top of every artist, label, publisher and manager's agenda right now, competition in the royalty collection business is fiercer than ever. In this special report, *Music Week* will profile the major players, look at key recent developments with rates and analyse the future of this vital sector...

— BY JAMES HANLEY —

Coming up on three years since the launch of the CMS Committee inquiry on streaming economics – and 24 months after the committee concluded that a "complete reset" of the market was needed – how much has changed? Well, quite a lot actually.

"What those debates do is get the industry talking and refocusing, and seeing what it can offer voluntarily, without intervention from the government," says Peter Leathem, CEO of PPL, whose more than 140,000 members include artists such as Ellie Goulding, Anderson Paak, George Ezra, Rita Ora and ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus.

"Since the DCMS committee [inquiry] kicked off, there have been a number of announcements from various record companies about changes they've made to their registry of money and wiping the slate clean on unrecouped balances," adds Leathem. "So a range of policies have developed since those discussions took place."

Like Leathem, Colin Young of Y Royalties provided evidence to MPs during the sessions but has mixed thoughts on its legacy.

"Have we seen a 'complete reset of the recorded music industry'? No, we haven't," says Young. "The inquiry has rightly identified that data is an important area of the music streaming business. Technology has led innovation in how music is consumed, it also therefore needs to keep up and push reporting and accounting systems to fairly remunerate creators."

Y Royalties, which offers services in royalties data, audit, valuations and rights management began as the royalties division at renowned accountancy firm CC Young & Co before spinning-off earlier this year.

"Creatives need the correct metadata to understand how their rights are exploited"
Colin Young
Y ROYALTIES

"Creatives need access to the correct metadata to properly understand how their rights are exploited; we strongly believe that the status quo needs to be challenged here and a minimum data quota of 'essential data' be established in all royalty reporting," says Young. "This is not just data concerning where and how music is consumed. It needs to follow the money and include currently obscured details. The same scepticism and directional testing that we employ through our statutory financial audit work needs to be applied to the transparency of music royalties."

Back in May, the UK government accepted the recommendation of the Culture, Media & Sport Committee on establishing a music industry remuneration working group and a commitment to improve music streaming metadata.

"We need the working groups established to tackle these data issues [and] not lose sight of the central issue: remuneration," warns Young. "Our fear is that the previous discussions on equitable remuneration in streaming are left behind, improvements in reporting and data alone do not go far enough in enacting change. How are new music services remunerated? Fixing data issues will not impact the land-grab of rights where the line is blurred between whether a service offers a traditional record sale/stream or something more akin to a broadcast."

Andrea Czapary Martin, CEO of UK-based rights management organisation PRS For Music, acknowledges the "renewed focus" on data challenges and opportunities in the industry worldwide, and shares her belief that debate is now turning into action.

"PRS For Music is determined to be a catalyst for the transition

"We paid out £836 million last year, a more than 23% increase on the year before"

Andrea Czapary Martin

PRS FOR MUSIC

discussion to delivery," says Martin, pointing towards PRS For Music's Nexus programme, which gives "greater visibility and control of industry data".

"We are making available the songwriter credits, works and recording identifiers and other essential metadata for nearly three million works," she explains. "Key partners are already using this data to improve their own metadata and in the coming weeks, we will be adding a new functionality to this service allowing individual members to search for specific works from this data set."

This year has also seen the launch of The Get Paid Guide – an education portal which provides creators with quick and easy guidance on what music data is, why it matters as well as how to ensure the data is working for them. The initiative was created in partnership with The Ivors Academy, the UK Music Publishers Association (MPA) and the UK's Intellectual Property Office.

"Partnerships of this kind will be essential in bringing music industry systems together onto one common rail, much like the systems that uphold the flow of money for banks globally," asserts Martin.

Tracey Myall, royalty director at the Music Week Awards 2023 Accountancy Firm winners Gelfand, Rennert & Feldman (GRF), says that handling big data efficiently "without sacrificing accuracy, transparency and integrity" continues to be a dominant topic in the marketplace.

"The development of powerful IT solutions has definitely come a long way," she says. "It's an exciting area which continues to grow."

Myall believes the expanding music pie makes the work of companies such as GRF all the more vital.

"Music sales are showing continued year-on-year growth and with that in mind it's never been so important for clients to manage their assets, strategically maximising collections across all income sources globally," she stresses. "Diversifying the ways in which artists monetise their music rights will continue to grow. As we've seen, the digital landscape continues its evolution and more doors of opportunity open themselves to artists."

Suggesting that regulatory change "looks inevitable" for streaming platforms, Myall adds: "This will only help empower rights holders as the continued push for a more balanced distribution model continues."

The challenge is to find a new methodology acceptable to all parties, reckons Austin Jacobs, FCA, partner at international advisory and accounting firm Prager Metis.

"A change to a user-centric methodology of distributing streaming royalties will increase the earnings of some artists, but will also cause some artists to receive less than they currently do," he says.

Spotify followed other DSPs in increasing its subscription cost in over 50 markets, including the US and UK, this summer following more than a decade of static prices. The music business had long called for higher charges to generate more revenue for artists and rights-holders, and Jacobs considers the move a major positive.

"All artists' royalties can be grown through increases in the monthly subscriptions charged by the streaming companies," says Jacobs, who adds that growth can come from improving the monetisation of music consumption in certain countries, such as China. "Undertaking a royalty audit is a way to ensure that your royalties are being correctly calculated and reported in full. Artists usually have a limited period to dispute a royalty statement, so it is important to ensure that an audit is commissioned in a timely manner."

Yes to PRS: *PRS clients Raye (above) and Burna Boy (below)*

Earlier this year, the Music Fights Fraud alliance launched a global task force aimed at eradicating streaming fraud and streaming manipulation across DSPs. The initiative has earned widespread backing, including from Downtown, CD Baby, TuneCore and its parent company Believe, DistroKid, UnitedMasters, Symphonic, Empire and Vydia, along with Spotify and Amazon Music.

It is estimated that streaming abuse could account for hundreds of millions in revenue lost each year, industry-wide.

"The biggest issue impacting the royalty sector is the manipulation by certain parties of the current system used to pay out royalties by streaming companies, whereby fake streams are fed into the royalty ecosystem to financially reward the perpetrators," says Jacobs. "This is leading to a reduction in the per-stream rate being paid out to artists due to a disproportionate increase in the number of streams versus the rise in subscription fees. The industry must find better ways to attribute royalties and compensate artists fairly based on legitimate streams. Suppose the method of streaming royalty distribution can be adjusted to remove incentives for artificial streaming. In that case, artists will earn what they truly deserve from having their music genuinely appreciated and listened to."

"User-centric streaming royalties will increase the earnings of some artists, but cause others to receive less"

Austin Jacobs

PRAGER METIS

PHOTO: Callum Walker Hutchinson

Y ROYALTIES

ROYALTY SERVICES FOR THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

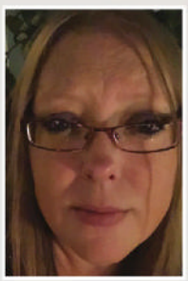
ROYALTY AUDIT, ROYALTY ACCOUNTING, VALUATION & TRANSACTIONAL SERVICES,
DATA MANAGEMENT, ROYALTY TRACKING & RIGHTS MANAGEMENT

WWW.YROYALTIES.CO.UK

"We get 45,000 new recording details a week, which we're matching to billions of seconds of airplay"

Peter Leathem

PPL



"It's never been so important for clients to manage their assets"

Tracey Myall

GELFAND, RENNERT & FELDMAN

PRS, which represents more than 165,000 writers, composers, and music publishers globally, including the likes of Elton John, Harry Styles, Raye, Coldplay, Burna Boy and Becky Hill, revealed in April that it was ahead of schedule in terms of its target to achieve £1 billion in distributions by 2026. The CMO collected a record £964 million on a constant currency basis in 2022, up 22.9% on the previous 12 months and an increase of £154m on the previous high of £810m achieved in 2019, pre-pandemic.

"Our record revenues are a reflection of our ambitious commercial strategy, focused on growing the value of existing licences and identifying new business opportunities in the global market," says Martin. "Over the last two years we have secured an unprecedented 82 major agreements with new and existing customers. This includes renewed deals with long-standing partners such as the BBC, Sky, Channel 4, Netflix, Apple TV and Sony PlayStation and new deals with services such as Disney + and Amazon Freevee. ICE, our joint-venture with STIM and GEMA, has also continued to deliver increased royalties for members and is the market-leading provider of multi-territory licensing and services."

Martin stresses that royalties collection is only half of a collecting societies' responsibility – a successful society also needs to pay royalties quickly and accurately.

"I'm delighted to say that we paid out £836.2 million last year, a more than 23% increase on the year before," she adds. "This was possible because we have invested in systems and technologies with the capacity to efficiently process tens of trillions of lines of data. Our commercial partnership team are in active negotiations with a number of large new and existing customers. We are also developing new and improved tariffs across online and public performance. Early indications suggest 2023 will again deliver revenue growth for PRS members."

PPL, meanwhile, generated revenues of £272.6 million in 2022, a year-on-year increase of 7.8%, marking the highest level of revenue in the licensing company's 89-year history. Revenues from the use of recorded music in public places also rose significantly, up 39.8% to £100.8m.

"There has been a good return to growth following Covid," observes Leathem. "There was a massive impact on our ability to collect, particularly public performance revenue, in the UK from 2020 onwards and that's gradually come back to normal. Underlying that is a really strong demand from our business licensees – whether it's radio, TV or public places – to use music. The 200-plus experts that we have are incredibly well placed to manage recordings. We get 45,000 new recording details a week coming in, which we're then matching to billions of seconds of airplay. And when you layer on our expertise in dealing with 109 overseas agreements and trying to make sure we've got the best relationships, collection positions, tax arrangements and cost rates in place, it makes for quite a compelling offering from our point of view."

Young also sees cause for optimism given recent events.

"We've long been concerned about the diminishing value of music and the returns to creators," he says. "So it's been refreshing over the last year to hear news such as the CRB decision to uphold the back-dated mechanical royalty rate increase in the Phonorecords III case, BMI securing a bigger share of live revenue for songwriters, and price rises across all major DSPs including Spotify. The stance of major record companies on paying out royalties on long-unrecouped deals is also a small step in the right direction. Further to the major labels relaxing their stance on historic unrecouped balances, we feel that the administration of catalogues has the potential for change. The lengthening of copyright life in recent years is beneficial to artist writers but the biggest winners are the rightsholders, who in most cases are not the creatives."

Party PPL: *PPL clients Nova Twins (above) and Rita Ora (below)*

Despite global economic challenges, Martin agrees the outlook is very positive.

"We predict growth opportunities from digital platforms especially in the video gaming space, and we're excited to embrace early, exploratory opportunities in the metaverse and Web3," she says. "Next year, PRS will celebrate its 110th year. The challenge for any well-established business is how to embrace the new, take controlled risks, pioneer tech, innovate and keep a tight control of costs. It's our priority to provide efficient, quality services that benefit our writer, composer and publisher members globally."

This year also marked the five-year anniversary of the PPL-PRS joint-venture, headquartered in Leicester.

"We're very hopeful for its prospects over the next five to 10 years," concludes Leathem. "We think there are really good prospects for growth on public performance licensing over the time to come."

PHOTO: Federica Burelli

Your World. Worth More.
We understand the complexities and challenges of the entertainment and music industries. Prager Metis has specialized in accounting and advisory services for the entertainment and music industry since its inception, over 100 years ago.
Specialized services include:
• Business Management
• Copyright Planning and Compliance Valuation
• Tour Accounting
• International Tax Compliance
• Royalty Auditing
New York | Los Angeles | Miami | London | Metaverse
pragermetis.com/uk
PragerMetis
Advisors & Accountants for Entertainment

Gelfand, Rennert & Feldman

SPECIALISTS IN THE MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Business Management, Tour Accounting, Royalty Administration, Audit & Valuations

LONDON x LOS ANGELES x NEW YORK x NASHVILLE

WelcomeUK@grfllp.com

OUR VISION YOUR FUTURE

PRS for MUSIC

PRS for Music is redefining the global standard of rights management, delivering innovative solutions to grow the value of members' music.

Our Nexus programme is addressing worldwide data issues, giving music creators greater control and ensuring they are paid quickly and accurately.

/prsformusic

CENTRE STAGE

Music Venue Trust CEO Mark Davyd's monthly deep dive into live music's biggest issues...

THIS MONTH:

ROOT OF THE MATTER

Last month I wrote about the increasing focus on large-scale events within the undoubtedly positive overall financial picture for live music.

I also highlighted that nearly all of the arena and stadium-filling artists that are at the forefront of this astonishing year emerged from a grassroots music venue sector which is currently having its worst year since 2014. The juxtaposition has never been starker.

A key consideration in the sustainability of this economic model is whether the appetite for live music is an infinite resource.

The total capacity of all of London's grassroots music venues, if they are all open on a single night, is 51,000 people. They open an average of 4.5 times a week, which means they're searching for an audience in the region of 200,000 live music fans each week.

The average entrance fee is £10.80, which means that London's grassroots sector is looking to tap into around £2 million in live music expenditure decisions every week.

According to Music Venue Trust research, the sector has been operating at 41% capacity across its programme, so generating 80,000 ticket sales means a demand of approximately £800,000 per week on the audiences.

At that rate of capacity, the sector is losing substantial amounts of money on its live music offer, which it also balances with its Food & Beverage offering. The consumers of 80,000 tickets will spend around £1.2m per week on F&B, which is about £5m a month.

In total, across one week in London, the grassroots venue sector is looking for 200,000 fans to make a total potential demand on their pockets – if every show sold out – in the region of £3.5m. That's about £14m a month, which means it's all about getting the attention of 80,000 fans and generating circa £2m economic demand per week.

The capacity of Wembley Stadium is 90,000. In one week in July it hosted shows by Mötley Crüe and Def Leppard, followed by Blur. The average ticket price was £78.

In that same week, London hosted BST Hyde Park. There were three shows at Crystal Palace, there was Greenwich Summer Sounds, plus performances from Maroon 5, Hollywood Vampires, Kiss and Iron Maiden at The O2, The Weeknd with two nights at London Stadium, and The 1975 at Finsbury Park.

That was 1.2m on sale tickets for an average price of £84, creating a demand of £100m on the audiences. Furthermore, that was 22 shows of 20,000 capacity (or more) all in one week, in one city, asking fans to part with not only £100m in entry fees, but also around £200m in F&B.

In 2022, the entire grassroots music venue sector, not just in London but in every corner of the nation, had tickets on sale to a maximum value of £324m, and achieved actual sales of £133.6m gross value, including charges.

In comparison, in that one week in London, the industry provided opportunities for those audiences to spend an equivalent amount of money seeing one event each. This was clearly an opportunity they were eager to take, as the vast majority of the shows in that week operated at full or near to full capacity.

The success at the very top of the business is an incredibly important part of the live music ecosystem, and we desperately need artists creating career opportunities for everyone in the industry. However, no one seems to have looked at some fundamental elements of the system that should be considered integral to its sustainability in the long-term.

We need in-depth research conducted on audience attitudes towards their live music purchasing. If Blur need 160,000 people at Wembley Stadium, what impact does that have on the rest of the live music ecosystem?

If large-scale London shows need 1.2m people in one week in July, what is the impact on the rest of the ecosystem across that entire year?

A short-term approach that only looks at the immediately available profit from any single artist or event is damaging the rest of the live music ecosystem, and it's starting to damage the large-scale events themselves. The proliferation of these kinds of events is also having a negative impact on smaller festivals, which are starting to feel the squeeze on the public's pockets in equal measure to the grassroots sector. This is a huge challenge to the future of the industry.

Furthermore, the average age of the headline acts playing in that one week in July was 57. Ultimately, we must find a much better and more sustainable financial plan of how to function as a live music industry, especially one which isn't simply taking all the available live music spend there is to support older artists.

"No one seems to have looked at the fundamental elements which are integral to the music industry's sustainability in the long-term"

MARK DAVYD MUSIC VENUE TRUST

STATE OF THE (INDIE) NATION:

A monthly update on the ongoing closure crisis facing the UK's Grassroots Music Venues, which MVT tackles through its Emergency Response Service of experts; legal, licensing, planning, development, financial, property and noise gurus...

New Emergency response service cases in 2023: 84
Ongoing cases: 65
Grassroots Music Venue closures in 2023: 69
Grassroots Music Venue openings in 2023: 1

HITMAKERS

The world's greatest songs. By the people who made them.

SZA
KILL BILL

American producer and musician **Carter Lang** worked on **SZA**'s 2017 album **Ctrl** before eventually co-writing the global star's US No.1 **Kill Bill.** Here, Lang tells *Music Week* how the Quentin Tarantino-inspired smash hit came to life and went on to become a viral sensation on TikTok...

INTERVIEW: JAMES HANLEY

SZA and I met in Chicago in 2015. I'm from Chicago, and after college I kind of surfed around studios with friends of mine. I had a keyboard in my car, I went with my friend Peter Cottontale to Classick Studios and I met SZA there. I didn't really know who she was at the time or anything, so I was like, 'I know this studio, I'm just going to do my thing.'

We started working on a beat and we just started connecting. We talked about synthesisers and sounds. She can get kind of nerdy and I really liked that. I was like, 'I've got a synthesiser in the car, you're going to love this,' and I brought it upstairs. It was probably the first analogue synthesiser that I had purchased – this weird Roland mono synth. It was an early '70s primitive synth and we were bugging out over it.

A month later, SZA hit me up to play with her at Lollapalooza because we had a mutual friend who was playing drums and she remembered that I was a bass player. There was an opening for me to come and play and that's how it all kick-started. We went on tour and it was a big family affair.

With Kill Bill, I had been trading ideas back and forth with Rob Bisel, a friend and collaborator of mine. He'd engineered with SZA for the duration of the SOS project and we had a meet-up at my spot. He left me with a few little single instrument pieces. As producers, we all stack those up from time to time and I was like, 'Three or four of these are really dope, I want to work on these.' I tried a drum beat right after he left because as soon as I get something, I want to jump on it. There was more of a rapping type of vibe to the beat because it felt like the music, those chords at the beginning, just led to that.

We listened to it the next week and I was like, 'Nah, I've got to take a different approach. Maybe it's not a digital drum-sounding song, maybe it's something more organic.' A lot of the physical instruments that I have in my studio evoke old, dusty, warm and organic tones, so I started working on it a bit more and then Rob and I finished the beat off to the point where it was something that we could play to SZA. I liked the beat a lot. We didn't have to remake the beat a million times, it came together quickly.

I popped by the studio that same month and we played her a few ideas before I left for the night to see if there was anything that caught her [attention]. She was humming a lot of different things. We were done with our beats and then Rob went to the bathroom so it was just her and me, and I was like, 'Man, I want to see what this beat is saying – this might be a sleeper.'

It was pretty late, but SZA started finding the pocket and then that was it – the flywheel unravelled. I think they kept working on it when I left, or they worked on it the next day and Rob was like, 'Yo, this shit sounds crazy!' And that was pretty much that.

We had to incubate it for a second with the rest of the songs and we started to see that it wasn't as obscure as we thought. It started becoming a moment that we could build parts of the album around, and we didn't have to change too much after the beat demo, it was just tweaks. I don't know how many times SZA went over the vocals, but she definitely made sure it was airtight.

I think the title, which SZA came up with alongside Rob, also just came from the premise [of the song] and it was something that made sense of it all. Before the beat had been called Igloo, entirely different! I love a sinister line like, "*I might kill my ex*" over such a sweet sound. The contradiction is what makes it beautiful and it's poetic instead of being [literal]. Everyone knows how difficult it feels to have that shadow of an ex. And I'm a huge fan of Kill Bill, the movie. I saw it in theatres and it was such an impactful film for me. I had it on DVD, what can I say?

I'm not a big TikTok-er, but it's great that it allows people to express themselves with music in a completely different way, and all the fans finding their own ways to have fun with Kill Bill and with songs in general on the platform is amazing. All of a sudden a song that might not have sounded like a hit has become a viral situation, although how long that lasts is a whole different thing.

SZA has her own style. Her rhythms can get so complex, it's this crazy combination of rap and song and she finds this perfect balance which just cuts through. The tone of her voice is also just so unique. When she hits the high notes you can feel the emotion in each line. Being with her for so long helped change my perception of rhythm and melody and how I was able to work that into my instruments.

We are always keeping a few ideas floating around, but as for upcoming projects, that's up to SZA to say. Whatever her plans are, I trust her process. I trust her timing on whatever it is that she wants to do with music. And even if it's last minute, I'm ready. It's exciting to me to make music that is going to have that bandwidth.

"Working with SZA helped change my perception of rhythm and melody"
CARTER LANG

Killing it: *Carter Lang and [inset] SZA in the Kill Bill video*

Writer's Notes

Publishers: Solána Rowe Publishing Designee/ TDE Publishing/Songs Of Universal, Inc., Bisel Creative Sound/Sony Songs, Carter Lang Publishing Designee/Zuma Tuna/ Warner-Tamerlane
Writers: Solána Rowe, Rob Bisel, Carter Lang
Release date: 09.12.22
Label: Top Dawg Ent/RCA
Total Sales (OCC): 941,444

Publisher's Corner

Leading executives salute their star songwriters...

Ryan Press, president, North America, Warner Chappell Music:
"Carter is one of the most creative young geniuses in music today. Time and time again, his talents and originality shine, from working on music with SZA to producing massive hits like Sunflower [Post Malone & Swae Lee] – which is one of the biggest songs ever – to the many other projects he digs into with a range of artists. I have been lucky to support him since day one, and it's been amazing to see all the timeless music he's cultivated over the years. I can't wait to see what the next 10 years hold."

PHOTOS: Erik Melvin, Jonathan Weiner

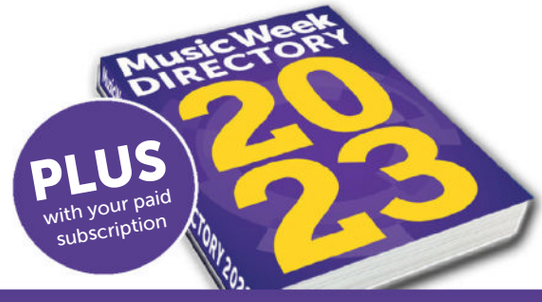
Music Week

Inside the business of music. Established 1959

8 GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE:

1. Get the print magazine every month - set your agenda for the month ahead
2. Make informed decisions with our vital music biz information
3. Get the Music Week Directory - worth £50 - absolutely FREE
4. Gain insightful opinion, analysis and global first-looks at exciting new artists
5. Receive our Friday night email with weekly Chart Updates
6. Access unlimited online news with our daily Morning Briefing newsletter
7. Free website content
8. And much more depending on the subscription option you choose

PRINT, DIGITAL PREMIUM, OR BUNDLE PREMIUM - CHOOSE THE OPTION THAT BEST WORKS FOR YOU!



SUBSCRIBE NOW

musicweek.com/subscribe or call +44 (0) 20 8955 7020

Music Week
MONTHLY CHARTS

Victory lap: Central Cee & Dave top the monthly singles chart for the third time in a row

Subscribe to *Music Week* for digital access to the weekly charts, including Alan Jones' analysis

PHOTO: Andrew Timms

72/74 – Singles/Albums
73/75 – Analysis
76/77 – Market Shares
78 – Streaming/Compilations
79 – Vinyl
80/81 – Genre Top 20s
82/83 – UK Airplay/EU Airplay
84 – Spotify
85 – Vevo

Official Charts Company | RADIO MONITOR we're always listening | Spotify | vevo

Official Singles Chart

SINGLES CHART TOP 75

AUGUST CHART WEEKS 31-34

BRIT CERTIFIED PLATINUM, GOLD & SILVER AWARDS

★ Platinum (600,000)
● Gold (400,000)
● Silver (200,000)

Sales Increase · Highest Climber
+50% Sales Increase · Highest New Entry

TM	LM	MTH	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL CATALOGUE NUMBER (DISTRIBUTOR) (PRODUCER) PUBLISHER (WRITER)
1	1	3	**Dave & Central Cee** Sprinter Live Yours/Neighbourhood GBUM72305159 (UDS) ★ (Caleb/Leslie/Dave/J.Legxacy/Evans/TR..)WarnerChapp./Sony/Universal/CC (Omoregie/Caesar-Su/Olaloye/Caleb/Leslie/Evans...)
2	30	2	**Billie Eilish** What Was I Made For? Interscope USUM72307484 (UDS) (Finneas/A.Wyatt/M.Ronson)Kobalt/Universal (F.O'Connell/B.Eilish)
3	11	3	**Dua Lipa** Dance The Night (From Barbie The Album) Warner USATV2301509 (Arvato) (M.Ronson/Picard Brothers/A.Wyatt)Universal/Kobalt/Concord/SonyATV (Dua Lipa/C.Ailin/M.Ronson/A.Wyatt)
4	2	2	**Olivia Rodrigo** Vampire Geffen USUG12305004 (UDS) (D.Nigro)Sony ATV (O.Rodrigo/D.Nigro)
5	4	6	**Taylor Swift** Cruel Summer EMI USUG11901472 (UDS) ★ (A.Swift/J.Antonoff)Universal/Sony ATV/Peermusic (T.Swift/J.Antonoff/A.Clark)
6	23	2	**Nicki Minaj/Ice Spice/Aqua** Barbie World... Atlantic/Capitol/Republic USAT22306213 (Arvato) (RiotUSA)Warner Chapp./Universal/MCA (DJ Enuff/JohnnyJam/Delgado/Rasted/Nystrøm/Norreen/Ice Spice/Minaj/Dif)
7	6	3	**Peggy Gou** (It Goes Like) Nanana XL GBBKS2300123 (Integral UDS) (Peggy Gou)Kobalt (Kim Min-ji)
8	New		**Becky Hill & Chase & Status** Disconnect Polydor GBUM72306588 (UDS) (Chase & Status)Sony ATV/Universal/Concord/CC (Hill/Makis/Poole/McIntosh/Milton/Kennard)
9	12	2	**Gunna** Fukumean 300 Ent. USAT22306575 (Arvato) (Dunk Rock /Flo)Kobalt/Sony ATV/CC (S.Kitchens/F.Onganga/L.DiFabbio)
10	New		**Calvin Harris & Sam Smith** Desire Columbia GBARL2300969 (UDS) (C.Harris/BURNS)EMI/Warner Chapp./BMG (A.Wiles/S.Smith/M.Burns/S.Roman)
11	5	6	**Calvin Harris & Ellie Goulding** Miracle Columbia GBARL2300300 (UDS) ★ (C.Harris/BURNS)EMI/SonyATV/Kobalt/WarnerChappell (C.Harris/M.Burns/E.Goulding/Pablo Bowman/P.Rycroft)
12	New		**Charli XCX** Speed Drive (From Barbie The Album) Atlantic USAT22306163 (Arvato) (EasyFun)EMI/Universal... (C.Aitchison/F.Keane/various)
13	13	3	**Nathan Dawe, Joel Corry & Ella Henderson** 0800 Heaven Atlantic GBAHS2300402 (Arvato) (J.Corry/N.Dawe/Punctual)Kobalt/Sony/Budde/Phrased Differently/Universal/Warner Chapp./CC (Henderson/Barbe...)
14	8	3	**Hannah Laing & RoRo** Good Love WUGD GBUM72304092 (UDS) (H.Laing/J.Hurr)Universal/Warner Chapp./Sentric/CC (P.Bascomb/H.Laing/J.Hurr/P.Harris/R.Griffith)
15	7	4	**Jazzy** Giving Me Chaos GBUM72206719 (UDS) (Belters Only/M.Ralph)Sony/CC (C.Bissett/R.Griffiths/Y.Byrne)
16	17	3	**Jorja Smith** Little Things FAMM QM6N22315660 (The Orchard) (P2J)/New Machine/DAMEDAME)EMI/Stellar/Sony/Kobalt/WarnerChap./CC (J.Smith/A.Jordan/B.Boko/E.Nelson/M.Stafford...)
17	10	8	**Miley Cyrus** Flowers RCA USSM22202811 (UDS) ★2 (Kid Harpoon/T.Johnson)Warner Chappell/Pulse/Concord (M.Pollack/M.Cyrus/G.Hein)
18	18	11	**Taylor Swift** Anti-Hero EMI USUG12205736 (UDS) ★2 (J.Antonoff/T.Swift)Universal/Sony ATV (T.Swift/J.Antonoff)
19	9	4	**Rudimental, Charlotte Plank & Vibe Chemistry** Dancing Is... Room Two GBARL2300488 (UDS) (Rudimental/BillenTed/VibeChemistry/Shapes)BMG/Universal/Kobalt/Reservoir/SonyATV/CC (Dryden/Aggett/Bellis/Conway...)
20	New		**Ryan Gosling** I'm Just Ken (From Barbie The Album) Atlantic USAT22305736 (Arvato) (Ronson/Wyatt)Concord/Kobalt (M.Ronson/A.Wyatt)
21	3	3	**J Hus Ft Drake** Who Told You Black Butter/OVO/Republic GBARL2300716 (UDS) (P2J)Warner Chappell/BMG/Universal/Kobalt (J Hus/R.Isong/EY/A.Graham/G.Judd)
22	22	3	**The Weeknd, Playboi Carti & Madonna** Popular Interscope/Republic/XO USUG12303890 (UDS) (Metro Boomin/M.Dean/The Weeknd)Universal/MCA/CC (Tesfaye/Flippin/Carter/MetroBoomin/Walker/Dean/Levinson/Madonna)
23	20	12	**Rema & Selena Gomez** Calm Down Jonzing Worldwide/Mavin NGA3B2214004 (Virgin/UDS) ★2 (Andre Vibez/London)Warner Chappell/Sony ATV (D.Ikubor/A.Uwaifo/M.Hunter)
24	14	5	**David Kushner** Daylight Miserable QZXDB2300005 (Virgin/UDS) (R.Kirwan)Miserable Worldwide (D.Kushner/H.Hubers/J.Fedryk/J.Williams)
25	32	3	**Byron Messia** Talibans Geffen/Simple Stupid QZFZ22348066 (UDS) (Kelly Beatz)Sony ATV/CC (D.Byron/C.Ogbuene)
26	New		**Doja Cat** Paint The Town Red Ministry Of Sound USRC12301713 (UDS) (Earl on the Beat)Prescription/Universal/PW/BMG (A.Dlamini/I.Bynum/B.Bacharach/H.David)
27	33	3	**DOD** So Much In Love Armada NLF712302567 (Armada) (D.O.D)Bucks (D.O'donnell)
28	15	6	**Switch Disco & Ella Henderson** React Relentless GB11023000113 (UDS) (Punctual/Switch Disco)Sony/Budde/Phrased Differently/Warner Chappell (E.Henderson/M.Cottone/R.Miles)
29	21	17	**Harry Styles** As It Was Columbia USSM12200612 (UDS) ★3 (Kid Harpoon/T.Johnson)Universal/Pulse/One Year Yesterday (H.Styles/T.Hull/T.Johnson)
30	26	3	**Anne-Marie & Shania Twain** Unhealthy Atlantic/Asylum/EMI GBAHS2300381 (Arvato) (C. & R. McDonough)EMI/Kobalt (AM.Nicholson/C.McDonough/R.McDonough/tbc)
31	New		**Chase & Status And Bou Ft Irah, Flowdan, Trigga & Takura** Baddadan EMI GBUM72306881 (UDS) (Chase & Status/Bou UK)Concord/Hatfish/CC (A.Bouguenna/E.Bryant/M.Veira/W.Kennard/S.Milton/T.Tendayi/T.Smith)
32	New		**Travis Scott Ft Drake** Meltdown Epic/Republic USSM12305021 (UDS) (Coleman/BNYX/Boi-1da/Vinylz/T.Keith/Skeleton Cartier/T.Scott)SonyATV/Warner Chapp./Universal/MCA/CC (Webster...)
33	25	3	**Tom Grennan** How Does It Feel Insanity GBARL2300439 (UDS) (Falk/Linvill)Sony/WarnerChap/EMI/Kobalt (Grennan/Tighe/Falk/Green/Scott/Mann/Payne)
34	24	8	**Libianca** People 5K QZTB52268087 (UDS) ★ (Mage the Producer/JAE5)Sony/Kobalt (L.Kenzonkinboum Fonji/O. Moses Odia)
35	19	3	**Kylie Minogue** Padam Padam BMG GB5KW2301017 (ADA Arvato) (Lostboy)Warner Chappell (I.Wroldsen/PJ Rycroft)
36	41	200	**The Killers** Mr Brightside Vertigo GBFFP0300052 (UDS) ★8 (Saltzman/The Killers)Universal. (Flowers/Keuning)
37	48	5	**Post Malone** Chemical Republic USUM72305206 (UDS) (Post Malone/Bell/Watt)Universal/MCA/Kobalt (Post Malone/L.Bell/W.Walsh/A.Watt)
38	New		**Olivia Rodrigo** Bad Idea Right? Geffen USUMV2302226 (UDS) (D.Nigro)Sony ATV (O.Rodrigo/D.Nigro)
39	31	2	**Jung Kook Ft Latto** Seven BigHit Ent./RCA USA2P2330092 (INgrooves) (A.Watt/Cirkut)SonyATV/Universal/Kobalt (A.Watt/J.Bellion/H.Walter/T.Thomas/A.Stephens)
40	29	56	**Lewis Capaldi** Someone You Loved EMI DEUM71806776 (UDS) ★8 (TMS)Sony ATV/BMG (Capaldi/Roman/Kohn/Kelleher/Barnes)
41	16	2	**D-Block Europe & Clavish** Pakistan D-Block Europe USZXT2351612 (Virgin/UDS) (Da Beatfreakz)Sony ATV/Warner Chappell/Bucks (Young Adz/Dirtbike LB/Clavish/O.Ebele/U.Ebele)
42	New		**Travis Scott Ft Playboi Carti** Fe!n Epic/Republic USSM12305010 (UDS) (T.Scott/J.Sweet)Sony ATV/Kobalt/CC (J.Webster/J.Carter/Sheck Wess/J.Sweet)
43	36	6	**Ed Sheeran** Eyes Closed Atlantic GBAHS2300175 (Arvato) (A.Dessner/FRED/Max Martin/Shellback)Sony ATV/Kobalt/MXM/Sony (E.Sheeran/Shellback/F.Gibson/Max Martin)
44	37	9	**SZA** Kill Bill RCA/Top Dawg USRC12204584 (UDS) ★ (C.Lang/R.Bisel)Universal/Warner/Sony ATV (S.Rowe/C.Lang/R.Bisel)
45	40	13	**The Weeknd** Die For You Republic/XO USUG11601011 (UDS) ★ (McKinney/Cirkut/Tesfaye/Cashmere Cat/Prince 85)SMP/Kobalt/Sony ATV/Universal/WMMW/.. (Tesfaye/Mckinney/Prince 85..)
46	28	5	**David Guetta, Anne-Marie & Coi Leray** Baby Don't Hurt Me Parlophone UKWLG2300016 (Arvato) (Guetta/T.Green/Hawkins)Sony ATV/Universal/MCA/Rokstone/Jackback (S.Mac/Guetta/Sheeran/McDaid/Leray/Hawkins/Green...)
47	42	9	**PinkPantheress** Boy's A Liar Warner GBAYE2202560 (Arvato) ★ (Mura Masa/PinkPantheress)Sony ATV/BMG (G.Walker/A.Crossan)
48	53	3	**Bou Ft Slay** Closer Island GBUM72303098 (UDS) (Bou)CC (Bou/Slay)
49	61	15	**Taylor Swift** Style EMI USCJY1431319 (UDS) ★ (MaxMartin/Shellback/Payami)Sony ATV/Warner Chappell Scandinavia/Kobalt/MXM (Swift/MaxMartin/Shellback/Payami)
50	27	5	**Lewis Capaldi** Wish You The Best Vertigo DEUV72300302 (UDS) (TMS/Capaldi)Sony ATV/BMG (L.Capaldi/JP Saxe/Malay)
51	44	15	**OneRepublic** I Ain't Worried Interscope USUM72206227 (UDS) ★2 (Oscroft/Spry/Kutzle/Tedder)EMI/Downtown (B.Yttling/B.Kutzle/J.Eriksson/P.Morén/R.Tedder/T.Spry)
52	46	9	**Raye Ft 070 Shake** Escapism Human Re Sources QMDA62217995 (The Orchard) ★ (M.Sabath)Warner Chappell/Sony ATV (R.Keen/M.Sabath/D.Balbuena)
53	49	27	**Ed Sheeran** Bad Habits Asylum GBAHS2100318 (Arvato) ★5 (Sheeran/FRED/McDaid)Sony ATV/Universal/Promised Land (E.Sheeran/J.McDaid/F.Gibson)
54	43	12	**David Guetta & Bebe Rexha** I'm Good (Blue) Parlophone UKWLG2200055 (Arvato) ★2 (Guetta/Reznikov)Jackback/BMG/Sony ATV/Gz 2538 (Guetta/Purcell/Rexha/Plested/Randone/Lobina/Gabutti)
55	56	66	**Fleetwood Mac** Everywhere Warner USWB19900202 (Arvato) ★4 (L.Buckingham/R.Dashut)Universal (C.McVie)
56	45	114	**Vance Joy** Riptide Atlantic AULI01385760 (Arvato) ★5 (Keogh/White/Castle)We Are unified PTY (Keogh)
57	New		**Lizzo** Pink (From Barbie The Album) Atlantic USAT22305729 (Arvato) (Wyatt/R.Reed/Ronson)Concord/Kobalt/SonyATV/WarnerChapp. (Ronson/Wyatt/Frederic/Jefferson)
58	New		**Stormzy & Raye** The Weekend 0207/Merky GBUM72305950 (UDS) (London/RAYE)Warner Chappell (M.Omari Owuo Jr./R.Keen)
59	59	104	**Coldplay** Viva La Vida Parlophone GBAYE0800265 (Arvato) ★4 (Dravs/Eno/Hopkins/Simpson)Universal. (Berryman/Buckland/Champion/Martin)
60	New		**Travis Scott Ft SZA & Future** Telekinesis Epic USSM12305019 (UDS) (T.Scott/Boogz/J.Sweet/Ye/Hudmo)EMI/SonyATV/Universal/Kobalt/Warner Chapp... (Webster/Rowe/Cash/Boyd/Ye...)
61	73	62	**Florence + The Machine** Dog Days Are Over Island GBUM70900209 (UDS) ★3 (Ford/Summers)Universal. (Welch/Summers)
62	38	4	**Loreen** Tattoo Polydor SEUM72201638 (UDS) (Jansson/Boström/G:son)Peermusic/Warner Chappell/Kobalt/CC (Talhaoui/Thörnfeldt/Cazzi Opeia/Jansson/G:son/Boström)
63	34	5	**Fifty Fifty** Cupid Parlophone KSA012239180 (Arvato) (Siahn/Udin/Von Mentzer/Felländer-Tsai)CC (L.Udin/A.Von Mentzer/M.Felländer-Tsai/Siahn/Ahin/Keena)
64	67	30	**Tears For Fears** Everybody Wants To Rule The World Mercury GBF088590110 (UDS) ★3 (Chris Hughes)BMG (I.Stanley/R.Orzabal/C.Hughes)
65	New		**Troye Sivan** Rush Polydor AUUM72300170 (UDS) (Styalz Fuego/Novodor/Zhone)EMI/Sony ATV/Universal/MCA/Kobalt/CC (Mellett/McLaughlin/Chapman/Behr/Novodor/Hickey)
66	47	11	**Venbee & Goddard** Messy In Heaven Columbia GBARL2201902 (UDS) ★ (A.Goddard/Tao/J.Manson)Kobalt/Sentric/Universal/Warner Chapp. (Doyle/Fable/Goddard/Cinti)
67	New		**Sonny Fodera & MK Ft Clemetine Douglas** Asking Solotoko US39N2307761 (ADA Arvato) (MK/S.Fodera)Peermusic/Sony ATV/BMG (C.Douglas/M.Kinchen/S.Fodera)
68	58	16	**George Ezra** Green Green Grass Columbia GB1102200463 (UDS) ★2 (J.Pott/S.Price)Warner Chappell/BMG (G.Ezra/J.Pott/S.Price)
69	74	22	**Taylor Swift** Blank Space EMI USCJY1431309 (UDS) ★3 (MaxMartin/Shellback)Sony ATV/Kobalt/MXM (Swift/Max Martin/Shellback)
70	Re-Entry		**Fleetwood Mac** Dreams Rhino/Warner USWB10400046 (Arvato) ★4 (Fleetwood Mac/K.Caillat/R.Dashut)Kobalt (S.Nicks)
71	54	34	**Glass Animals** Heat Waves Polydor GBUM72000433 (UDS) ★4 (Dave Bayley/P.Epworth)Beggars (D.Bayley)
72	68	24	**Ed Sheeran** Shivers Asylum GBAHS2100816 (Arvato) ★3 (E.Sheeran/Steve Mac/Fred again..)Sony ATV/Universal/Rokstone (E.Sheeran/S.Mac/J.McDaid/K.Lavelle)
73	39	11	**Stephen Sanchez** Until I Found You Republic USUG12103651 (UDS) (I.Fitchuk/K.Snyder)Universal MCA/Sony ATV (S.Sanchez/E.Beihold)
74	New		**Fred Again & Obongjayar** Adore U Atlantic GBAHS2300908 (Arvato) (Fred/Four Tet/Parisi/T.Wincorn)Sony/MNRK/CC (Gibson/Obongjayar/Wincorn/Lister/Wimbley/Robinson/Parisi/Morales/Umoh)
75	New		**Drake & Central Cee** On The Radar... Columbia/OVO Sound USLD91749183 (Foundation Media) (H.Arsenault/Kid Masterpiece)Universal/MCA/Sony ATV/CC (A.Graham/O.Caesar-Su/H.Arsenault/K.Barua/D.DeGrate)

© Official Charts Company. All Rights Reserved.

ANALYSIS

***Music Week* digs into the month's top chart stories...**

Pace setters: *Central Cee & Dave*

MARATHON EFFORT

01

Central Cee & Dave

Sprinter (Live Yours/Neighbourhood)

SALES: 190,732

If it weren't for ACR, Sprinter would have notched its 12th straight week at No.1 in the singles chart in August's final frame, which goes some way to illustrate the enduring power of the Central Cee & Dave collaboration that led their Split Decision EP released earlier this year. Adding 190,732 sales last month, its overall tally now stands at 774,100. On Spotify, it has more than 321 million streams, to go with over 100m YouTube views. Both rappers are continuing their collaborative streak. Central Cee also features at No.75 in August's chart with On The Radar (38,459 sales) with Drake, while Dave recently released two tracks with French rapper Tiakola. The two London MCs will surely rack up more hits in the near future.

MADE TO MEASURE

02

Billie Eilish

What Was I Made For? (Polydor/Interscope)

SALES: 169,344

In the week Billie Eilish reached No.1 with Barbie soundtrack smash What Was I Made For?, female solo artists took all of the Top 6 slots in the chart for the first time ever. Eilish pipped Dua Lipa to the top spot thanks to 7,787 sales of a limited edition pink cassette. It became the star's second UK No.1, following 2020 Bond theme No Time To Die, which has 909,455 sales to date.

To be or not to Barbie: *Billie Eilish*

NIGHT LIFE

Dua Lipa

Dance The Night (Warner Records)

SALES: 166,752

03

In the month she turned 28, Dua Lipa celebrated by scoring her fourth UK No.1 single with Dance The Night, which replaced Eilish's hit at the weekly summit. The first time that consecutive No.1s came from the same film soundtrack was in 1963 when Cliff Richard & The Shadows' theme from Summer Holiday was replaced by The Shadows' Foot Tapper. Dance The Night hit No.1 on its 13th consecutive week in the Top 20.

RUSH OF BLOOD

Olivia Rodrigo

Vampire (Polydor/Geffen)

SALES: 136,059

04

Amidst the proliferation of Barbie hits (there are a further four in our monthly chart), Olivia Rodrigo's comeback continued apace in August. Vampire, the introductory hit from this month's new album Guts, sold 136,059 copies to boost its to-date tally to 309,256. Follow-up single Bad Idea Right? debuted at No.6 on the weekly chart and sold 50,371 copies last month. It is Rodrigo's sixth Top 10 single and her ninth Top 75.

LINK UP

Becky Hill And Chase & Status

Disconnect (Polydor)

SALES: 93,877

08

Released in July when it debuted at No.25 in the weekly list, Becky Hill's Chase & Status collaboration became the singer's 22nd hit and the electronic duo's 17th. Since then, it has powered up the charts, posting 93,877 sales in August to finish at No.8 in our monthly list.

PAINT THRESHOLD

Doja Cat

Paint The Town Red (Ministry Of Sound)

SALES: 66,428

26

Attention, the first track from Doja Cat's upcoming fourth album entered the weekly chart at No.37 earlier this summer and follow-up Paint The Town Red has built on that success, debuting at No.20 and climbing to No.4 in August's final week. It is her fourth Top 10 hit from 18 Top 75 entries and was in the running to become her first No.1 as *Music Week* went to press.

Art attack: *Doja Cat*

Official Albums Chart

ALBUMS CHART TOP 75

AUGUST CHART WEEKS 31-34

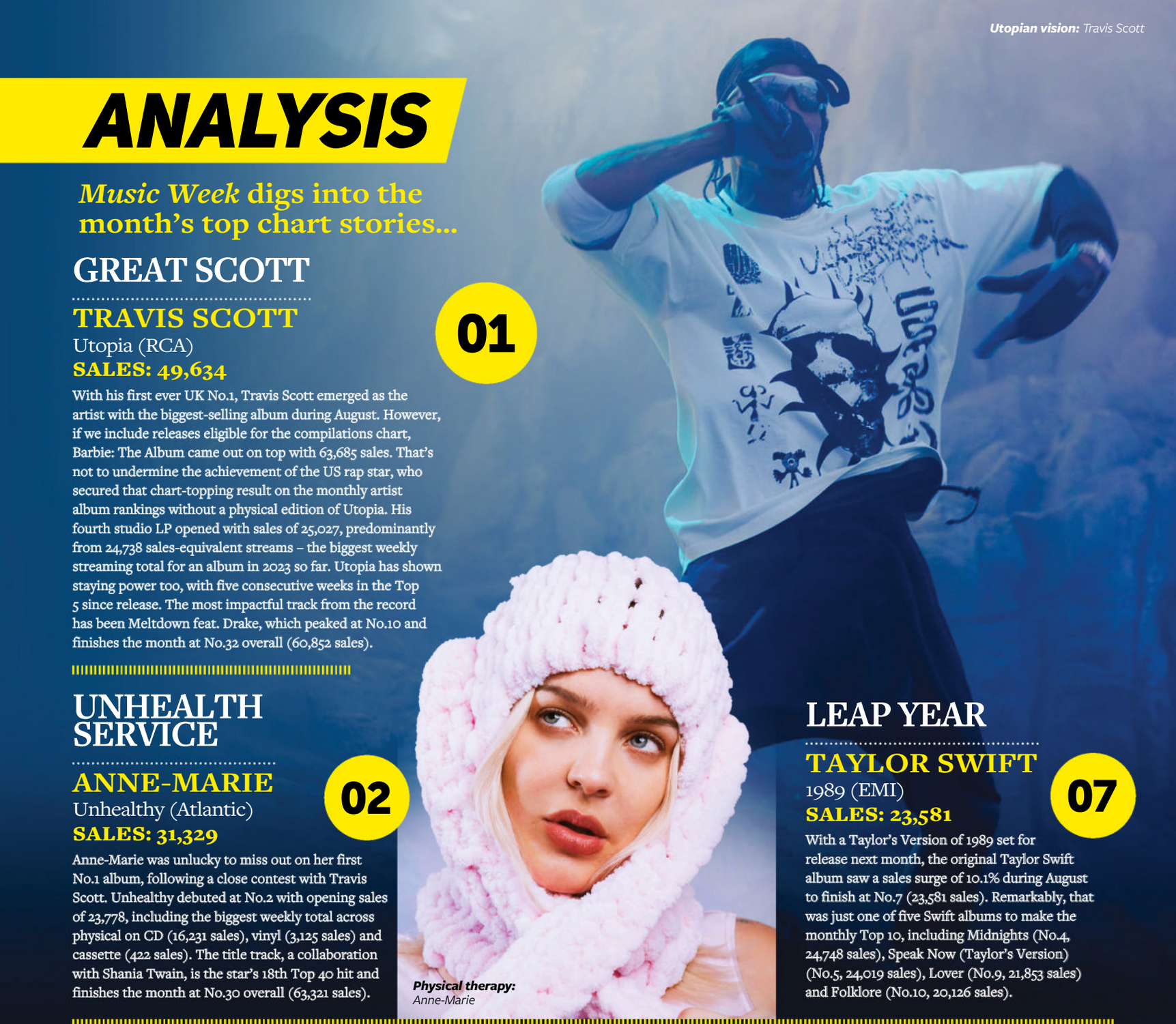
BRIT CERTIFIED PLATINUM, GOLD & SILVER AWARDS

★ Platinum (300,000)
● Gold (100,000)
● Silver (60,000)

Sales Increase · +50% Sales Increase · Highest Climber · Highest New Entry

TM	LM	MTHS	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL CATALOGUE NUMBER (DISTRIBUTOR) (PRODUCER)
1	New		**Travis Scott** Utopia RCA 0196871341882 (UDS) (30 Roc/The Alchemist/Ritter/ANTHRO/Beyoncé/BNYX/Boi-1da/BoogzDaBeast/Buddy Ross/Cadenza/Coleman/Wright...)
2	New		**Anne-Marie** Unhealthy Atlantic 5054197534225 (Arvato) (Billen Ted/C.McDonough/E.Blair/Mojam/Nami/R.McDonough/RISC)
3	3	31	**The Weeknd** The Highlights Republic/XO 3573443 (UDS) ★2 (The Weeknd/Max Martin/Holter/Payami/McKinney/Cirkut/Tesfaye/Dukes/Metro Boomin/Illangelo/Dre Moon/Billions DiehL..)
4	5	11	**Taylor Swift** Midnights EMI 4579009 (UDS) ★2 (J.Antonoff/T.Swift/J.Sweet/B.Cook/Sounwave/Keanu Beats/A.Dessner)
5	1	2	**Taylor Swift** Speak Now (Taylor's Version) EMI 5567824 (UDS) ● (A.Dessner/C.Rowe/J.Antonoff/T.Swift)
6	New		**Post Malone** Austin Republic 5579628 (UDS) (L.Bell/Max Martin/Post Malone/R.Yacoub/A.Watt)
7	8	72	**Taylor Swift** 1989 EMI 4701883 (UDS) ★5 (Swift/Taylor/Zancanella/MaxMartin/Shellback/Payami/Antonoff/Mattman & Robin/Kurstin/Chapman/Heap)
8	4	70	**Elton John** Diamonds Mercury/UMR 6700657 (UDS) ★4 (Dudgeon/John/Franks/Thomas/Michael/Leonard/Bell/T-Bone Burnett/Bellotte/Bacharach/C.Bayer Sager/Narada/Penny...)
9	9	45	**Taylor Swift** Lover EMI 7792868 (UDS) ★ (Dukes/Bell/Swift/Antonoff/Little/Sounwave)
10	21	37	**Taylor Swift** Folklore EMI 0602435034805 (UDS) ★ (Dessner/Antonoff/Swift)
11	12	58	**Fleetwood Mac** 50 Years – Don't Stop Rhino 0603497855612 (Arvato) ★3 (Fleetwood Mac/R.Dashut/K.Caillat)
12	6	16	**Harry Styles** Harry's House Columbia 19658707272 (UDS) ★2 (Kid Harpoon/T.Johnson/S.Witte)
13	New		**Cian Ducrot** Victory Polydor 5524672 (UDS) (C.Ducrot/E.Holloway/J.Manson/J.Wander/N.Atkinson/R.Marrone/S.Mac/T.Salvati/R.Andrew)
14	New		**Hozier** Unreal Unearth Island 5523798 (UDS) (Hozier-Byrne/Gitelman/Bekon/Pete G/Gherman/Chakra/Feder/Decilveo/Sariah Mae/Mehlenbacher/Balmoris/Cook)
15	17	30	**Taylor Swift** Reputation EMI 3003310 (UDS) ★2 (Antonoff/Swift/Martin/Shellback/Payami/Görres/Holter)
16	14	129	**Eminem** Curtain Call: The Hits Interscope 9887893 (UDS) ★9 (Eminem/Dr Dre/Resto/The 45 King & Louie/DJ Head/Elizondo/Bass/The Recording Academy/Mel-Man)
17	New		**Skindred** Smile Earache MOSH650 (Proper) (J.Emery)
18	New		**Liam Gallagher** Knebworth 22 Warner 5054197648007 (Arvato) (n/a)
19	10	118	**Arctic Monkeys** AM Domino WIGCD317 (Integral UDS) ★6 (Ford/Orton)
20	28	4	**Post Malone** The Diamond Collection Republic 0602455704467 (UDS) ● (Post Malone/Carter Lang/Ging/Illangelo/L.Bell/Metro Boomin/Tank God/Watt)
21	20	176	**ABBA** Gold – Greatest Hits Polydor 2752259 (UDS) ★21 (Andersson/Ulvaeus)
22	19	28	**Olivia Rodrigo** Sour Geffen 3807744 (UDS) ★2 (Dan Nigro/Alexander23/Jam City/A.Rodrigo)
23	23	24	**Michael Jackson** The Essential Epic/Legacy 88697832712 (UDS) ★5 (Jones/Jackson/Various)
24	27	114	**Queen** Greatest Hits EMI 2761039 (UDS) ★24 (Baker/Queen/Mack)
25	25	116	**Oasis** Time Flies: 1994-2009 Big Brother RKIDCD66 (The Orchard/Proper) ★5 (Oasis/Coyle/Morris/Stent/Sardy/Gallagher)
26	New		**The Hives** The Death Of Randy Fitzsimmons Disques Hives THV10LP (FUGA/Proper) (P.Berger)
27	22	9	**SZA** SOS RCA 0196589564931 (UDS) ● (A.Atlantica/Buccellati/Babyface/Beat Butcha/benny blanco/B.Slatkin/BLK Beats/C.Lang/D.McKinnon/DJ Dahi/E.Rise/E.Haynie...)
28	7	2	**J Hus** Beautiful And Brutal Yard Black Butter 19658830152 (UDS) (A.Blake/S.Hawkes/TobiShyBoy/P2J/L.Lennox/The Elements/E.Y/FumesBeats/G.Judd/iO/LekaaBeats/MaestroTheBaker...)
29	13	4	**Lewis Capaldi** Broken By Desire To Be Heavenly Sent EMI 4870745 (UDS) ● (S.Mac/L.Capaldi/E.Holloway/Fat Max Gsus/MaxMartin/N.Atkinson/Mutt Lange/TMS/C.Bishop)
30	18	52	**Lewis Capaldi** Divinely Uninspired To A Hellish Extent EMI 7747307 (UDS) ★5 (Atkinson/Holloway/Earp/Capaldi/TMS/Cook/Pillai/Sneddon/JR Ho)
31	24	47	**Lana Del Rey** Born To Die Polydor 2787091 (UDS) ★4 (Haynie/Parker/Berger/Robopop/Bhasker/Daly/Sneddon/Bauer-Mein/Nowels/Braide/Shux/Skarbek/Howe)
32	30	120	**Fleetwood Mac** Rumours Rhino/Warner 8122796778 (Arvato) ★14 (Fleetwood Mac/R.Dashut/K.Caillat)
33	New		**Joel Corry** Another Friday Night Atlantic 5054197751769 (Arvato) (Billen Ted/Bl3ss/Guetta/Digital Farm Animals/Tuinfort/Jax Jones/Corry/Kolidescopes/Thompson/MoJam/Dawe/Applebaum...)
34	2	2	**Blur** The Ballad Of Darren Parlophone 5054197660238 (Arvato) (J.Ford)
35	16	3	**Tom Grennan** What Ifs & Maybes Insanity 19658749102 (UDS) ● (Wells/Falk/Bagnall/Bryer/Priddy/Scott/Riley/Thompson/LostBoy/Corry/Crew/Hannah/Green/Linvill/The Six/Digital Farm...)
36	29	45	**Harry Styles** Fine Line Columbia 19439705122 (UDS) ★2 (Tyler Johnson/Kid harpoon/Witte/Kurstin/Bhasker)
37	31	78	**Ed Sheeran** ÷ Asylum 0190295859039 (Arvato) ★13 (Mac/Sheeran/Elizondo/Hicks/B.Blanco/McDaid/Killbeatz/Labrinth)
38	49	29	**Taylor Swift** Evermore EMI 3564858 (UDS) ★ (J.Antonoff/T.Swift/A.Dessner/B.Dessner/BJ Burton/J.McAlister)
39	New		**The Sherlocks** People Like Me & You TeddyBoy TEDDYBOY002CD (Absolute Proper) (D.Radhad-Jones/Al Groves/K.Thomas Crook/tbc)
40	35	22	**Ed Sheeran** = Asylum 0190295859039 (Arvato) ★3 (E.Sheeran/S.Mac/J.McDaid/Parisi/Fred again../J.Rubel/L.Bell/Watt/B.Gibson/E.Anderfjärd/RØMANS/F.Vance)
41	New		**N-Dubz** Timeless EMI EMICD2089 (UDS) (Fazer/Mazebeats/LiTek/WhyJay/tbc)
42	37	13	**Eminem** Curtain Call 2 Interscope 4817107 (UDS) ● (Eminem/Aalias/Alex da Kid/Villasana/Battle Roy/BJ Burton/Boi-1da/d.a. got that dope/DJ Khalil/Dr. Dre/DVLP/Haynie/Filthy...)
43	44	18	**Taylor Swift** Red (Taylor's Version) EMI 3873762 (UDS) ● (A.Dessner/B.Walker/C.Rowe/Danny D./D.Wilson/E.Anderfjärd/Espionage/J.Antonoff/Jacknife Lee/J.Bhasker...)
44	36	29	**The Weeknd** Starboy Republic/XO 5727592 (UDS) ★2 (The Weeknd/McKinney/Cirkut/B.Billions/Mano/M.Martin/Payami/B.Blanco/Cashmere Cat/Jake One/Swish/Labrinth...)
45	New		**Jungle** Volcano Caiola CAI002CDS (The Orchard/Proper) (J.Lloyd/Jamie Lloyd-Taylor/Jungle/L.Kitto)
46	50	26	**Whitney Houston** I Will Always Love You – The Best Of... Arista 88765413932 (UDS) ★ (Kashif/Masser/NM Walden/Babyface/"LA" Reid/Foster/Clivillés/Cole/Duplessis/Wyclef/Tricky/Kiriakou/Mason/Dupri/Cox...)
47	41	22	**Little Mix** Between Us RCA 19439926272 (UDS) ★ (S.Mac/Bloodshy/Taroncher/Guetta/Saint Fleur/Electric/Duars/Goldfingers/Reynolds/Ashurst/Kearns/Goldstein/Class/Kamille...)
48	32	13	**Beyoncé** Renaissance Columbia/Parkwood Ent. 19658744502 (UDS) ● (Beyoncé/The-Dream/Duran/Dean/S1a0/Aossey/White/Dijon/Penny/Solomon/NovaWav/Rissi/Saadiq/Skrillex/Al Cres/Beam...)
49	48	43	**Elvis Presley** Elv1s: 30 #1 Hits RCA 07863680792 (UDS) ★7 (S.Sholes/E.Presley/L.Newman/W.Scharf/J.Leiber/M.Stoller/Chet Atkins/B.Porter/C.Moman/F.Jarvis/S.Phillips/R.Hull)
50	46	97	**Oasis** (What's The Story) Morning Glory? Big Brother RKIDCD007 (The Orchard/Proper) ★16 (Morris/Gallagher)
51	47	69	**Maroon 5** Singles Interscope 4754556 (UDS) ★2 (Maroon 5/Wallace/Endert/B.Blanco/MaxMartin/Shellback/Robopop/Stent/Farrar/Lange/Zancanella/Levine/MdL/Ammo...)
52	New		**Miles Kane** One Man Band Modern Sky M9477UKCD (Virgin/UDS) (J.Skelly)
53	52	157	**Bob Marley & The Wailers** Legend Tuff Gong 5489042 (UDS) ★14 (Bob Marley & The Wailers/C.Blackwell/E.Brown/J.Nuber/Scratch Perry)
54	40	102	**Arctic Monkeys** Whatever People Say I Am, That's What... Domino WIGCD162 (Integral UDS) ★7 (Abbiss/Smyth)
55	39	10	**Foo Fighters** The Essential Sony Music CG 19658737752 (UDS) ● (G.Norton/G.Kurstin/Foo Fighters/N.Raskulinecz/Butch Vig/B.Jones/A.Kasper)
56	38	4	**Ed Sheeran** (Subtract) – Asylum 5054197163395 (Arvato) ● (A.Dessner/Fred again/Max Martin/Shellback)
57	53	24	**50 Cent** Best Of Polydor/UMR 5741146 (UDS) ★ (Dr.Dre/Elizondo/Dirty Swift/ Mr.Porter/Dangerous LLC/Storch/B-Money "BS"/ Hi-Tek/C. Styles/Sire/Timbaland/Danja/Apex...)
58	51	82	**Red Hot Chili Peppers** Greatest Hits Warner 9362485452 (Arvato) ★6 (Rubin/Beinhorn)
59	54	3	**Noah Kahan** Stick Season Island 4851912 (UDS) (G.Simon/K.Snyder/N.Kahan)
60	60	91	**The Beatles** 1 Apple Corps 0830702 (UDS) ★13 (McCartney)
61	62	20	**Kanye West** Graduation Roc-a-fella 1745502 (UDS) ★2 (West/Miller/Dean/DJ Toomp/Campbell/Robertson/Plain Pat/Hudson/Brion/Tommy D/Nottz/Daniels)
62	56	57	**Billy Joel** Piano Man – The Very Best Of Billy Joel Columbia 82876823592 (UDS) ★4 (Ramone/Stewart/Joel/Jones)
63	58	64	**Katy Perry** Teenage Dream Virgin CDV3084 (UDS) ★5 (Dr. Luke/Blanco/Martin/StarGate/Stewart/Harrell/Ammo/Wells)
64	New		**Fredo** Unfinished Business PG FREDOCD1 (Virgin/UDS) (JJ Beatz/RonHal/Alottazeros/210ZN/Prod. Syren/Show N Prove/Adzbeats/Edds/Mason Beats/Pivi/AyoPeeb/Roddy Beatz...)
65	Re-Entry		**The Rolling Stones** Forty Licks ABKCO/Decca/Polydor CDVDS2964 (UDS) ★3 (The Rolling Stones/Dust Brothers/Don Was/C.Kimsey/J.Miller/A.Loog Oldham)
66	61	5	**Taylor Swift** Fearless (Taylor's Version) EMI 3584509 (UDS) ● (C.Rowe/T.Swift/A.Dessner/J.Antonoff)
67	63	68	**Bruno Mars** Doo-Wops & Hooligans Elektra 0075678833250 (Arvato) ★7 (The Smeezingtons/Needlz/The Supa Dups)
68	Re-Entry		**Lady Gaga** The Fame Interscope 2726601 (UDS) ★11 (RedOne/Fusari/Gaga/Kierszenbaum/Orton/Space Cowboy/Kierulf/Schwartz)
69	75	51	**Green Day** Greatest Hits: God's Favorite Band Reprise 0093624909170 (Arvato) ★ (Ernst/Green Day/Cavallo/Vig/B.J Armstrong)
70	66	82	**David Bowie** Legacy Parlophone 0190295919900 (Arvato) ★2 (Rodgers/Bowie/Visconti/Queen/Scott/Dudgeon/Maslin/Winstanley)
71	New		**NewJeans** 2nd EP Get Up Polydor 2974337 (UDS) (250/F.Scoca/Jinsu Park/H.Motzfeldt/C.Stoltenberg)
72	55	9	**Metro Boomin** Heroes & Villains Island 0602448810441 (UDS) ● (Various)
73	Re-Entry		**The Killers** Direct Hits Vertigo 3755766 (UDS) ★3 (The Killers/Saltzman/Flood/Moulder/Price/O'Brien/Taylor/Lillywhite/Gonzalez)
74	71	2	**Lauren Spencer Smith** Mirror Island 5575048 (UDS) (Niceforo/Fiore/Ducrot/Burris/Fontanella/Groothedde/Kurstin/HazeyEyes/Erikson/Evigan/Sorrells/Ruth/OAK/Marrone/T.I Jakke)
75	26	2	**D-Block Europe** DBE World D-Block Europe DBE17 (Virgin/UDS) (Da Beatfreakz/B.Spirit/DirtbikeLB/Eight8/Einer Bankz/Ghost Killer Track/H.Beech/Jony Beats/N.London/ProdByNinez/R14 Beats...)

© Official Charts Company. All Rights Reserved.



Utopian vision: *Travis Scott*

ANALYSIS

***Music Week* digs into the month's top chart stories...**

GREAT SCOTT

TRAVIS SCOTT

01

Utopia (RCA)

SALES: 49,634

With his first ever UK No.1, Travis Scott emerged as the artist with the biggest-selling album during August. However, if we include releases eligible for the compilations chart, Barbie: The Album came out on top with 63,685 sales. That's not to undermine the achievement of the US rap star, who secured that chart-topping result on the monthly artist album rankings without a physical edition of Utopia. His fourth studio LP opened with sales of 25,027, predominantly from 24,738 sales-equivalent streams – the biggest weekly streaming total for an album in 2023 so far. Utopia has shown staying power too, with five consecutive weeks in the Top 5 since release. The most impactful track from the record has been Meltdown feat. Drake, which peaked at No.10 and finishes the month at No.32 overall (60,852 sales).

UNHEALTH SERVICE

ANNE-MARIE

02

Unhealthy (Atlantic)

SALES: 31,329

Anne-Marie was unlucky to miss out on her first No.1 album, following a close contest with Travis Scott. Unhealthy debuted at No.2 with opening sales of 23,778, including the biggest weekly total across physical on CD (16,231 sales), vinyl (3,125 sales) and cassette (422 sales). The title track, a collaboration with Shania Twain, is the star's 18th Top 40 hit and finishes the month at No.30 overall (63,321 sales).

Physical therapy: *Anne-Marie*

LEAP YEAR

TAYLOR SWIFT

07

1989 (EMI)

SALES: 23,581

With a Taylor's Version of 1989 set for release next month, the original Taylor Swift album saw a sales surge of 10.1% during August to finish at No.7 (23,581 sales). Remarkably, that was just one of five Swift albums to make the monthly Top 10, including Midnights (No.4, 24,748 sales), Speak Now (Taylor's Version) (No.5, 24,019 sales), Lover (No.9, 21,853 sales) and Folklore (No.10, 20,126 sales).

PHOTO FINISH

CIAN DUCROT

13

Victory (Polydor)

SALES: 19,112

In an incredibly close chart race, Irish singer-songwriter Cian Ducrot edged ahead of Skindred with his debut. Victory opened at the summit with sales of 15,668 (including 10,299 CDs, 1,413 vinyl albums, 689 cassettes, 1,484 downloads and 1,783 sales-equivalent streams). Skindred's No.2 result for Smile (15,519 – just 149 copies behind) was their first ever Top 20 appearance.

Winner takes all: *Cian Ducrot*

PHOTOS: Ben Avin/George Murcey/Holly Whittaker

UNREAL DEAL

14

HOZIER

Unreal Unearth (Island)

SALES: 19,073

Hozier scored his first No.1 and biggest weekly total so far with third album Unreal Unearth. The Irish artist secured a chart-topping result in late August with 19,068 sales (7,534 CDs, 3,972 vinyl LPs, 2,151 cassettes, 591 digital downloads and 4,820 sales-equivalent streams). Lead single Eat Your Young reached No.22 in April to become his biggest hit since 2015.

SIBLING RIVALRY

18

LIAM GALLAGHER

Knebworth 22 (Warner)

SALES: 18,120

Liam Gallagher moved ahead of older brother Noel by securing a fifth solo No.1 with live set Knebworth 22. The album was recorded at the historic Hertfordshire venue's festival in June 2022. It debuted at No.1 on consumption of 16,204 units (8,122 CDs, 6,339 vinyl LPs, 989 digital downloads and 755 sales-equivalent streams).

AUGUST CHART WEEKS 31-34

Music Week Market Shares

Artist Singles share for the month measures share of the Top 75 best performing tracks of the month, across sales and audio streams.
Artist Albums share for the month measures share of the Top 75 Official Albums Chart.
AES = Album Equivalent Sales. SEA = Stream Equivalent Albums

THIS MONTH'S CHART SHARE

TOP 75 CHART BY CORPORATE GROUP

SINGLES
NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	43.55%
2	WARNER MUSIC	22.08%
3	SONY MUSIC	16.76%
4	SONY/UNIVERSAL	3.73%
5	UNIVERSAL 2/WARNER 1	2.42%
	OTHERS	11.45%

ARTIST ALBUMS
NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	54.50%
2	SONY MUSIC	21.09%
3	WARNER MUSIC	16.64%
4	DOMINO	2.53%
5	EARACHE	1.76%
	OTHERS	3.47%

ALL ALBUMS
NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	48.97%
2	WARNER MUSIC	22.11%
3	SONY MUSIC	19.73%
4	DOMINO	2.37%
5	SONY/UNIVERSAL	1.92%
	OTHERS	4.89%

TOP 75 CHART BY RECORD COMPANY

SINGLES
NO. 1 POLYDOR

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	POLYDOR	17.73%
2	EMI	10.99%
3	ATLANTIC	10.38%
4	COLUMBIA	9.65%
5	WARNER RECORDS	7.27%
6	ISLAND	4.67%
7	NEIGHBOURHOOD	3.98%
8	PARLOPHONE	3.60%
9	RCA	3.40%
10	VIRGIN MUSIC	2.85%
11	ATLANTIC/ISLAND/POLYDOR	2.42%
12	XL RECORDINGS	2.40%
13	FAMM	1.58%
14	BLACK BUTTER/ISLAND	1.46%
15	ISLAND 2/POLYDOR 1	1.44%
	OTHERS	16.18%

ARTIST ALBUMS
NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	25.27%
2	ISLAND	12.74%
3	POLYDOR	12.47%
4	RCA	11.56%
5	ATLANTIC	8.14%
6	RHINO (WARNERS)	3.95%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.33%
8	COLUMBIA	3.10%
9	DOMINO	2.53%
10	BIG BROTHER	2.30%
11	EARACHE	1.76%
12	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.70%
13	SONY MUSIC CG	1.67%
14	DISQUES HIVES	1.35%
15	BLACK BUTTER	1.29%
	OTHERS	6.85%

ALL ALBUMS
NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	22.97%
2	ATLANTIC	14.15%
3	POLYDOR	11.66%
4	ISLAND	11.24%
5	RCA	10.81%
6	RHINO (WARNERS)	3.69%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.12%
8	COLUMBIA	2.90%
9	DOMINO	2.37%
10	BIG BROTHER	2.15%
11	SONY MUSIC CG/EMI	1.92%
12	EARACHE	1.65%
13	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.59%
14	SONY MUSIC CG	1.56%
15	DISQUES HIVES	1.26%
	OTHERS	6.94%

THIS MONTH'S TOTAL MARKET SHARE

BY CORPORATE GROUP

SINGLES STREAMS
NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	36.4%
2	SONY MUSIC	20.0%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.1%
4	XL BEGGARS	1.2%
5	BMG	1.2%
	OTHERS	26.2%

SINGLES SALES
NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	32.8%
2	SONY MUSIC	19.2%
3	WARNER MUSIC	16.6%
4	BMG	2.3%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.5%
	OTHERS	27.5%

ARTIST ALBUM SALES
NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	31.6%
2	WARNER MUSIC	18.2%
3	SONY MUSIC	11.4%
4	BMG	3.8%
5	XL BEGGARS	2.1%
	OTHERS	33.0%

BY RECORD COMPANY

SINGLES STREAMS
NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	11.1%
2	RCA	10.7%
3	POLYDOR	9.6%
4	ISLAND	8.0%
5	COLUMBIA	6.2%
6	ATLANTIC	6.2%
7	WARNER RECORDS	4.1%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.7%
9	UMR	2.2%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	1.7%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	1.4%
12	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.4%
13	DECCA	1.3%
14	XL RECORDINGS	0.7%
15	BMG	0.7%
	OTHERS	31.9%

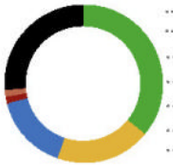
SINGLES SALES
NO. 1 RCA

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	RCA	10.8%
2	EMI	10.2%
3	POLYDOR	9.1%
4	ISLAND	6.4%
5	COLUMBIA	5.7%
6	ATLANTIC	5.5%
7	WARNER RECORDS	5.0%
8	PARLOPHONE	3.5%
9	UMR	2.8%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.2%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	1.7%
12	BMG	1.5%
13	DECCA	1.3%
14	XL RECORDINGS	1.0%
15	VIRGIN MUSIC	0.9%
	OTHERS	32.5%

ARTIST ALBUM SALES
NO. 1 EMI

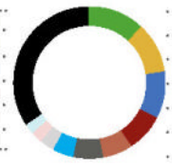
TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	9.3%
2	POLYDOR	8.0%
3	RHINO (WARNERS)	5.2%
4	ISLAND	4.8%
5	WARNER RECORDS	4.6%
6	ATLANTIC	4.2%
7	PARLOPHONE	3.8%
8	SONY MUSIC CG	3.6%
9	RCA	3.6%
10	UMR	3.3%
11	COLUMBIA	3.2%
12	BMG	2.8%
13	DECCA	2.2%
14	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.7%
15	EARACHE	1.6%
	OTHERS	38.0%

AES (ALL ALBUMS)
TOTAL MARKET - THIS MONTH



1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	36.0%
2	SONY MUSIC	19.5%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.4%
4	BMG	1.5%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.3%
	OTHERS	26.3%

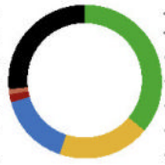
BY CORPORATE GROUP



1	EMI	11.1%
2	RCA	10.0%
3	POLYDOR	9.3%
4	ISLAND	7.7%
5	ATLANTIC	6.0%
6	COLUMBIA	5.9%
7	WARNER RECORDS	4.1%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.8%
9	UMR	2.5%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.0%
	OTHERS	38.5%

BY RECORD COMPANY

AES (ARTIST ALBUMS)



1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	36.0%
2	SONY MUSIC	19.3%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.5%
4	BMG	1.5%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.3%
	OTHERS	26.4%

BY CORPORATE GROUP

1	EMI	11.0%
2	RCA	10.1%
3	POLYDOR	9.4%
4	ISLAND	7.7%
5	ATLANTIC	6.0%
6	COLUMBIA	6.0%
7	WARNER RECORDS	4.2%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.9%
9	UMR	2.3%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.1%
	OTHERS	38.3%

BY RECORD COMPANY

MARKET STATISTICS - THIS MONTH

DATE	SINGLES				ARTIST ALBUMS				COMPS	ALL ALBUMS		
	SALES	AUDIO STREAMS	VIDEO STREAMS	TOTAL	PHYSICAL	DOWNLOADS	SEA2	TOTAL	TOTAL	SALES	SEA2	TOTAL
THIS MONTH	1,157,954	11,465,348,305	722,101,571	104,176,914	980,035	171,123	7,088,635	8,239,793	357,359	1,315,372	7,281,781	8,597,152
LAST MONTH	1,199,187	11,640,151,328	739,005,502	105,675,023	1,041,082	177,084	7,149,377	8,367,543	302,343	1,362,852	7,307,033	8,669,885
% CHANGE	-3.4%	-1.5%	-2.3%	-1.4%	-5.9%	-3.4%	-0.8%	-1.5%	18.2%	-3.5%	-0.3%	-0.8%

Your essential guide to the market shares for this month and 2023. Compiled from Official Charts Company data.

Official Charts Company

YEAR-TO-DATE TOTAL MARKET SHARE

BY CORPORATE GROUP

COMPILATION SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	40.6%
2	SONY MUSIC	31.2%
3	WARNER MUSIC	8.1%
4	BMG	3.6%
5	CHERRY RED	1.8%
	OTHERS	14.7%

ALL ALBUM SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	32.7%
2	WARNER MUSIC	16.9%
3	SONY MUSIC	13.9%
4	BMG	3.7%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.8%
	OTHERS	30.9%

SINGLES STREAMS NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	35.7%
2	SONY MUSIC	20.4%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.1%
4	XL BEGGARS	1.1%
5	BMG	1.1%
	OTHERS	26.6%

SINGLES SALES NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	32.9%
2	SONY MUSIC	21.4%
3	WARNER MUSIC	16.4%
4	BMG	2.4%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.1%
	OTHERS	25.8%

AES (ALL ALBUMS) NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	35.4%
2	SONY MUSIC	20.1%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.1%
4	BMG	1.6%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.3%
	OTHERS	26.5%

AES (ARTIST ALBUMS) NO. 1 UNIVERSAL

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	UNIVERSAL MUSIC	35.3%
2	SONY MUSIC	19.9%
3	WARNER MUSIC	15.3%
4	BMG	1.5%
5	XL BEGGARS	1.3%
	OTHERS	26.6%

BY RECORD COMPANY

COMPILATION SALES NO. 1 SONY CG

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	SONY MUSIC CG	27.6%
2	EMI	22.0%
3	UMR	11.6%
4	ATLANTIC	5.7%
5	POLYDOR	3.1%
6	BMG	2.6%
7	COLUMBIA	2.3%
8	CHERRY RED	1.8%
9	DECCA	1.6%
10	ISLAND	1.4%
11	RHINO (WARNERS)	1.3%
12	DEMON MUSIC	1.1%
13	RCA	1.1%
14	NEW STATE	0.9%
15	NOT NOW MUSIC	0.8%
	OTHERS	15.1%

ALL ALBUM SALES NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	10.9%
2	POLYDOR	7.4%
3	SONY MUSIC CG	6.6%
4	RHINO (WARNERS)	4.7%
5	ISLAND	4.4%
6	UMR	4.4%
7	ATLANTIC	4.4%
8	WARNER RECORDS	4.1%
9	PARLOPHONE	3.4%
10	RCA	3.3%
11	COLUMBIA	3.1%
12	BMG	2.8%
13	DECCA	2.1%
14	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.5%
15	EARACHE	1.4%
	OTHERS	35.6%

SINGLES STREAMS NO. 1 EMI

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	10.9%
2	RCA	10.7%
3	POLYDOR	9.3%
4	ISLAND	7.9%
5	COLUMBIA	6.5%
6	ATLANTIC	6.2%
7	WARNER RECORDS	4.0%
8	PARLOPHONE	2.8%
9	UMR	2.2%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	1.7%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	1.5%
12	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.4%
13	DECCA	1.3%
14	BMG	0.7%
15	DOMINO	0.7%
	OTHERS	32.2%

SINGLES SALES NO. 1 RCA

TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	RCA	12.3%
2	EMI	11.2%
3	POLYDOR	8.4%
4	ISLAND	6.5%
5	COLUMBIA	5.8%
6	ATLANTIC	5.5%
7	WARNER RECORDS	4.3%
8	PARLOPHONE	3.9%
9	UMR	2.6%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.3%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	1.8%
12	BMG	1.6%
13	DECCA	1.4%
14	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.0%
15	XL RECORDINGS	0.6%
	OTHERS	31.1%

AES (ALL ALBUMS) NO. 1 EMI

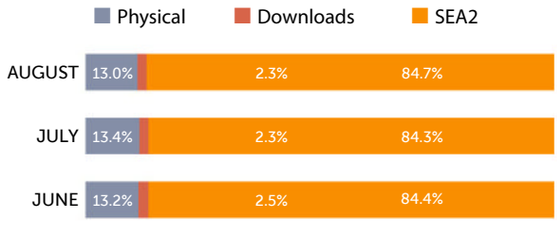
TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	11.0%
2	RCA	10.1%
3	POLYDOR	9.0%
4	ISLAND	7.4%
5	COLUMBIA	6.2%
6	ATLANTIC	5.9%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.8%
8	PARLOPHONE	3.0%
9	UMR	2.5%
10	SONY MUSIC CG	2.1%
11	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.0%
12	DECCA	1.5%
13	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.4%
14	BMG	1.1%
15	DOMINO	0.7%
	OTHERS	32.3%

AES (ARTIST ALBUMS) NO. 1 EMI

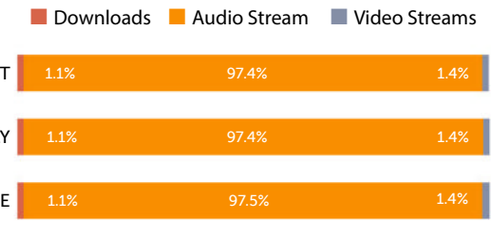
TW	COMPANY	SHARE
1	EMI	10.9%
2	RCA	10.2%
3	POLYDOR	9.1%
4	ISLAND	7.5%
5	COLUMBIA	6.3%
6	ATLANTIC	6.0%
7	WARNER RECORDS	3.9%
8	PARLOPHONE	3.0%
9	UMR	2.3%
10	RHINO (WARNERS)	2.0%
11	SONY MUSIC CG	1.8%
12	DECCA	1.5%
13	VIRGIN MUSIC	1.4%
14	BMG	1.0%
15	DOMINO	0.7%
	OTHERS	32.4%

FORMAT SPLITS

ALBUMS



SINGLES



MARKET STATISTICS - YEAR-TO-DATE

DATE	SINGLES				ARTIST ALBUMS				COMPS	ALL ALBUMS		
	SALES	AUDIO STREAMS	VIDEO STREAMS	TOTAL	PHYSICAL	DOWNLOADS	SEA2	TOTAL	TOTAL	SALES	SEA2	TOTAL
THIS YEAR	10,102,718	98,674,625,156	6,375,345,320	894,907,159	8,960,172	1,526,167	61,195,720	71,682,059	2,629,391	11,815,851	62,495,598	74,311,449
LAST YEAR	11,350,444	89,185,446,461	6,556,311,767	816,590,997	8,700,940	1,600,763	55,154,330	65,456,033	2,840,901	11,887,221	56,409,713	68,296,934
% CHANGE	-11.0%	10.6%	-2.8%	9.6%	3.0%	-4.7%	11.0%	9.5%	-7.4%	-0.6%	10.8%	8.8%

All market shares & data © Official Charts Company, published under licence by *Music Week*. Reproduction or republication elsewhere is strictly prohibited without the prior written consent of both the Official Charts Company & *Music Week*.

OFFICIAL UK STREAMING TOP 50

Official Streaming Chart

DAVE & CENTRAL CEE

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Dave & Central Cee	Sprinter	*Live Yours/Neighbourhood*
2	Billie Eilish	What Was I Made For?	*Interscope*
3	Dua Lipa	Dance The Night (From Barbie The Album)	*Warner*
4	Olivia Rodrigo	Vampire	*Geffen*
5	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice & Aqua	Barbie World (From Barbie The Album)	*Atlantic/Capitol/Republic*
6	Taylor Swift	Cruel Summer	*EMI*
7	Peggy Gou	(It Goes Like) Nanana	*XL*
8	Gunna	Fukumean	*300 Ent.*
9	Calvin Harris & Ellie Goulding	Miracle	*Columbia*
10	Jazzy	Giving Me	*Chaos*
11	Nathan Dawe, Joel Corry & Ella Henderson	0800 Heaven	*Atlantic*
12	Hannah Laing & RoRo	Good Love	*WUGD*
13	Becky Hill & Chase & Status	Disconnect	*Polydor*
14	Calvin Harris & Sam Smith	Desire	*Columbia*
15	Charli XCX	Speed Drive (From Barbie The Album)	*Atlantic*
16	Miley Cyrus	Flowers	*RCA*
17	David Kushner	Daylight	*Miserable*
18	Rudimental, Charlotte Plank & Vibe Chemistry	Dancing Is Healing	*Room Two*
19	Byron Messia	Talibans	*Geffen/Simple Stupid*
20	Rema & Selena Gomez	Calm Down	*Jonzing Worldwide/Mavin*
21	J Hus Ft Drake	Who Told You	*Black Butter/OVO/Republic*
22	Taylor Swift	Anti-Hero	*EMI*
23	Jorja Smith	Little Things	*FAMM*
24	Switch Disco & Ella Henderson	React	*Relentless*
25	The Weeknd, Playboi Carti & Madonna	Popular	*Interscope/Republic/XO*
26	Ryan Gosling	I'm Just Ken (From Barbie The Album)	*Atlantic*
27	DOD	So Much In Love	*Armada*
28	Harry Styles	As It Was	*Columbia*
29	Doja Cat	Paint The Town Red	*Ministry Of Sound*
30	Libianca	People	*5K*
31	Anne-Marie & Shania Twain	Unhealthy	*Atlantic/Asylum/EMI*
32	Chase & Status & Bou Ft Irah, Flowdan, Trigga & Takura	Baddadan	*EMI*
33	D-Block Europe & Clavish	Pakistan	*D-Block Europe*
34	Travis Scott Ft Drake	Meltdown	*Epic/Republic*
35	Tom Grennan	How Does It Feel	*Insanity*
36	The Killers	Mr Brightside	*Vertigo*
37	Lewis Capaldi	Someone You Loved	*EMI*
38	Jung Kook Ft Latto	Seven	*BigHit Ent./RCA*
39	The Weeknd	Die For You	*Republic/XO*
40	Kylie Minogue	Padam Padam	*BMG*
41	PinkPantheress	Boy's A Liar	*Warner*
42	SZA	Kill Bill	*RCA/Top Dawg*
43	Post Malone	Chemical	*Republic*
44	Olivia Rodrigo	Bad Idea Right?	*Geffen*
45	Ed Sheeran	Eyes Closed	*Atlantic*
46	Ed Sheeran	Bad Habits	*Asylum*
47	Lewis Capaldi	Wish You The Best	*Vertigo*
48	Raye Ft 070 Shake	Escapism	*Human Re Sources*
49	OneRepublic	I Ain't Worried	*Interscope*
50	David Guetta & Bebe Rexha	I'm Good (Blue)	*Parlophone*

OFFICIAL COMPILATIONS TOP 50

TM	TITLE	LABEL	DISTRIBUTOR
1	Barbie The Album	Atlantic	Arvato
2	Now That's What I Call Music! 115	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
3	The Greatest Showman OST	Atlantic	Arvato
4	Moana – OST	Walt Disney	UDS
5	Metro Boomin Pts Spider-Man: Across The...	Republic	UDS
6	Now That's What I Call Music! 15	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
7	Mamma Mia!	Polydor	UDS
8	Suicide Squad: The Album – OST	Atlantic	Arvato
9	Hamilton	Atlantic	Arvato
10	Eurovision Song Contest: Liverpool 2023	Universal	UDS
11	Encanto OST	Walt Disney	UDS
12	Now That's What I Call USA: The 80s	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
13	Frozen OST	Walt Disney	UDS
14	Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical – OST	Sony Classical	UDS
15	Six: The Musical	Loud Mouth	Integral UDS
16	The Lion King – OST	Walt Disney	UDS
17	Frozen II – OST	Walt Disney	UDS
18	Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again	Polydor	UDS
19	Guardians Of The Galaxy: Awesome Mix 3 – OST	Hollywood	UDS
20	Sing – OST	Republic	UDS
21	Grease – OST	Polydor	UDS
22	Disney's Lullaby Album	Walt Disney	UDS
23	Little Mermaid – OST	Walt Disney	UDS
24	Fifty Shades Of Grey – OST	Republic	UDS
25	Phil Collins Plays Well With Others	Rhino	Arvato
26	Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse (OST)	Republic	UDS
27	Now That's What I Call Music! 114	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
28	The Hits Album: The 80s Pure Pop Album	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	UDS
29	Now Yearbook Extra 1992	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
30	A Star Is Born OST	Interscope	UDS
31	Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani – OST	Saregama	The Orchard
32	Sing 2	Island	UDS
33	Now That's What I Call A Sizzling Summer	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
34	The Best Car Songs Album In The World... Ever!	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	UDS
35	Aladdin – OST	Walt Disney	UDS
36	Now That's What I Call Legendary	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
37	Descendants 3 – OST	Walt Disney	UDS
38	Top Gun: Maverick – OST	The Ultimate Collection USM	UDS
39	The Fault In Our Stars – OST	Atlantic	Arvato
40	The Best Summer Time In The World... Ever!	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	UDS
41	La La Land – OST	Interscope/Polydor	UDS
42	Loungin' – The Easy Pop Album	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	UDS
43	Now Yearbook 1992	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
44	The Best 60s & 70s Soul Album In The World...	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	UDS
45	The Hits Album: 70s Pop Album – The Star Hits	Sony Music CG/Spectrum	UDS
46	Guardians Of The Galaxy: Awesome Mix 1 – OST	Hollywood	UDS
47	The Greatest Showman Reimagined	Atlantic	Arvato
48	Heathers: The Musical	Ghostlight	ADA Arvato
49	Now That's What I Call Massive Hits & #1s	Sony Music CG/EMI	UDS
50	Descendants 2 – OST	Walt Disney	UDS

© Official Charts Company. All Rights Reserved.

Official Charts Company

OFFICIAL VINYL TOP 50s

OFFICIAL VINYL SINGLES

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Aphex Twin	Blackbox Life Recorder 21f	Warp
2	Sex Pistols	Holidays In The Sun	Virgin
3	The Prodigy	Breathe	XL
4	Mac Miller	NPR Music Tiny Desk Concert	Parlophone
5	Niall Horan	Meltdown	Capitol
6	Keane	Somewhere Only We Know	Island
7	Beabadoobee	Glue Song	Dirty Hit
8	Crawlers	Messiah	Polydor
9	Renee Rapp	Snow Angel	Interscope
10	Howard Jones	New Song	East West
11	Calvin Harris & Ellie Goulding	Miracle	Columbia
12	The Japanese House	Chewing Cotton Wool	Dirty Hit
13	Beck & Phoenix	Odyssey	Capitol
14	Khruangbin & Leon Bridges	Texas Sun	Dead Oceans
15	Royal Blood	Limbo	Warner
16	Spice Girls	Wannabe	Virgin
17	Jorja Smith	Little Things	FAMM
18	Kode 9	Infirmary	Fabric
19	Cigarettes After Sex	Nothing's Gonna Hurt You Baby	Spanish Prayers
20	Ghost	Kiss The Go-Goat	Loma Vista
21	New Order	Blue Monday	Rhino
22	Joy Division	Love Will Tear Us Apart	Rhino
23	Olivia Rodrigo	Vampire	Geffen
24	Cardi B Ft Megan Thee Stallion	WAP	Atlantic
25	Bad Omens	Limits	Sumerian
26	Jeff Beck & Eric Clapton	Moon River	Bushbranch Surfdog
27	The Specials	Ghost Town	Chrysalis
28	Phoebe Bridgers	Kyoto	Dead Oceans
29	The Kills	New York	Domino
30	Malcolm Mclaren & The Bootzilla...	Call A Wave	Epic
31	Maxïmo Park	Great Art	Prolifica
32	Beck	Thinking About You	Capitol
33	Donna Summer	Love To Love You Baby	Island
34	Kieran Hebden & William Tyler	Darkness Darkness	Psychic Hotline
35	Layo & Bushwacka!	Love Story (V.S. Finally)	XL
36	The 1975	The City	Dirty Hit/Polydor
37	ABBA	Ring Ring	Polar
38	Guns N' Roses	Hard Skool	Geffen
39	Everything But The Girl	Nothing Left To Lose	Buzzin' Fly
40	Baby Queen	Colours Of You	Polydor
41	Aphex Twin	Come To Daddy	Warp
42	Barry Gray	Joe 90 Main Titles	Silva Screen
43	Grandmaster Flash & The Furious...	The Message	Sanctuary
44	The 1975	Facedown	Dirty Hit
45	Kavinsky	Nightcall	Mercury
46	George Fitzgerald	Not As I	Double Six
47	Jake Bugg	All I Need	RCA
48	Pink Floyd Ft Andriy Khlyvnyuk	Hey Hey Rise Up	Rhino
49	The Yardbirds	Over, Under, Sideways, Down	DMG TV
50	Brian May	Star Fleet	EMI

OFFICIAL VINYL ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Liam Gallagher	Knebworth 22	Warner
2	The Hives	The Death Of Randy Fitzsimmons	Disques Hives
3	Jungle	Volcano	Caiola
4	Hozier	Unreal Unearth	Island
5	Skindred	Smile	Earache
6	Anne-Marie	Unhealthy	Atlantic
7	Blur	The Ballad Of Darren	Parlophone
8	The Sherlocks	People Like Me & You	TeddyBoy
9	Various	Barbie The Album	Atlantic
10	Dexys	The Feminine Divine	100%
11	Miles Kane	One Man Band	Modern Sky
12	Taylor Swift	Speak Now (Taylor's Version)	EMI
13	Snow Patrol	Final Straw	Polydor/UMR
14	Fleetwood Mac	Rumours	WEA
15	The View	Exorcism Of Youth	Cooking Vinyl
16	David Bowie	Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders – OST	Parlophone
17	Post Malone	Austin	Republic
18	Talking Heads	Stop Making Sense	Parlophone
19	Pink Floyd	The Dark Side Of The Moon	Rhino
20	Cian Ducrot	Victory	Polydor
21	Public Image Limited	End Of World	PiL Official
22	Taylor Swift	Midnights	EMI
23	Taylor Swift	Lover	EMI
24	Elton John	Diamonds	Mercury/UMR
25	Arctic Monkeys	AM	Domino
26	Harry Styles	Harry's House	Columbia
27	Girl Ray	Prestige	Moshi Moshi
28	Erasure	Always: The Very Best Of Erasure	Mute
29	Taylor Swift	Reputation	EMI
30	Birdy	Portraits	Warner UK
31	Boygenius	The Record	Interscope
32	Rolling Stones	Forty Licks	ABKCO/Decca/Polydor
33	Taylor Swift	Folklore	EMI
34	Amy Winehouse	Back To Black	Island
35	JPEGmafia & Danny Brown	Scaring The Hoes	Peggy
36	Wham!	The Singles: Echoes From The Edge Of Heaven	Sony Music CG
37	The Smiths	Hatful Of Hollow	WEA
38	Lana Del Rey	Did You Know That There's A Tunnel Under...	Polydor
39	Taylor Swift	1989	EMI
40	David Bowie	The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust	Simply Vinyl
41	Taylor Swift	Evermore	EMI
42	The Smiths	The Queen Is Dead	Rhino
43	Ben Howard	Is It?	Island
44	Arctic Monkeys	Favourite Worst Nightmare	Domino
45	Lana Del Rey	Born To Die	Polydor
46	Radiohead	OK Computer	XL
47	Arctic Monkeys	Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not	Domino
48	The Streets	Original Pirate Material	Pure Groove
49	Lady Gaga	The Fame	Interscope
50	Phoebe Bridgers	Punisher	Dead Oceans

© Official Charts Company. All Rights Reserved.

SPECIALIST ALBUMS TOP 20s

Official Charts Company

OFFICIAL AMERICANA TOP 20 ALBUMS

PHOTO: Aysia Marotta

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Noah Kahan	Stick Season	Island
2	Boygenius	The Record	Interscope
3	Neil Young	Chrome Dreams	Reprise
4	Far From Saints	Far From Saints	Ignition
5	Zach Bryan	American Heartbreak	Warner
6	Suzi Quatro & KT Tunstall	Face To Face	Sun
7	Bailey Zimmerman	Religiously The Album	Parlophone
8	Bonnie "Prince" Billy	Keeping Secrets Will Destroy You	Domino
9	First Aid Kit	Palomino	Columbia
10	The Clientele	I Am Not There Anymore	Merge
11	Sheryl Crow	Sheryl: Music From The Feature Documentary	Polydor/UMR
12	Rhiannon Giddens	You're The One	Nonesuch
13	William The Conqueror	Excuse Me While I Vanish	Chrysalis
14	The Teskey Brothers	The Winding Way	Decca
15	Nils Lofgren	Mountains	Wienerworld
16	Bob Dylan	Shadow Kingdom	Sony Music CG
17	Paul Simon	Seven Psalms	Sony Music CG
18	Bruce Springsteen	Only The Strong Survive	Columbia
19	Brett Young	Across The Sheets	Big Machine
20	Wilco	Cruel Country	DBPM

OFFICIAL CLASSICAL ARTIST TOP 20 ALBUMS

PHOTO: Anadolu Agency, Getty

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Ludwig Göransson	Oppenheimer – OST	Back Lot
2	Malakai	Golden	Decca
3	Ludovico Einaudi	Islands: Essential Einaudi	Decca
4	Max Richter	Sleep	Deutsche Grammophon
5	Alan Menken	The Little Mermaid – OST	Walt Disney
6	Ludovico Einaudi	Underwater	Decca
7	Ludovico Einaudi	In A Time Lapse	Decca
8	Max Richter	Voyager – Essential	Deutsche Grammophon
9	Howard Shore	The Lord Of The Rings: Trilogy – OST	Reprise
10	Jóhann Jóhannsson	The Theory Of Everything – OST	Back Lot
11	Max Richter	The Blue Notebooks	Deutsche Grammophon
12	Hans Zimmer & Lisa Gerrard	Gladiator – OST	Decca
13	LPO & David Parry	The 50 Greatest Pieces Of Classical	X5
14	Howard Shore	The Lord Of The Rings – OST	Reprise
15	Ludovico Einaudi	Una Mattina	Decca
16	André Rieu & Johann Strauss Or.	My Music My World: The Very Best Of	Decca
17	Ludovico Einaudi	Cinema	Decca
18	Alexis Ffrench	Dreamland	Sony Classical
19	Danny Elfman & Chris Bacon	Wednesday – OST	Lakeshore
20	Howard Shore	The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of...	Reprise

OFFICIAL HIP-HOP & R&B TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Travis Scott	Utopia	RCA
2	The Weeknd	The Highlights	Republic/XO
3	Eminem	Curtain Call: The Hits	Interscope
4	Post Malone	The Diamond Collection	Republic
5	SZA	SOS	RCA
6	J Hus	Beautiful And Brutal Yard	Black Butter
7	N-Dubz	Timeless	EMI
8	Eminem	Curtain Call 2	Interscope
9	The Weeknd	Starboy	Republic/XO
10	Whitney Houston	I Will Always Love You: The Best Of...	Arista
11	50 Cent	Best Of 50 Cent	Polydor/UMR
12	Kanye West	Graduation	Roc-A-Fella
13	Fredo	Unfinished Business	PG
14	Metro Boomin	Heroes & Villains	Island
15	D-Block Europe	DBE World	D-Block Europe
16	The Weeknd	After Hours	Republic/XO
17	50 Cent	Get Rich Or Die Tryin'	Interscope
18	Nicki Minaj	Queen Radio: Volume 1	Island
19	Xxxtentacion	Look At Me: The Album	Columbia
20	Drake	Certified Lover Boy	OVO/Republic

OFFICIAL JAZZ TOP 20 ALBUMS

PHOTO: Getty

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Glenn Miller	From Rags To Riches	Jazz Band
2	Sade	The Best Of	Epic
3	Sade	Lovers Live	Epic
4	Norah Jones	Come Away With Me	Blue Note
5	Sade	Lovers Rock	Epic
6	Ella Fitzgerald	Gold	Verve
7	Nina Simone	See-Line Woman: The Best Of	Spectrum
8	Nina Simone	Feeling Good	Verve
9	Miles Davis	Kind Of Blue	Columbia
10	Amy Winehouse	Frank	Island
11	Sade	Love Deluxe	Epic
12	Ray Charles	The Ultimate Collection	Not Now
13	Norah Jones	iTunes Originals	Virgin
14	Nat King Cole	Stardust	Woowi
15	Various	Burlesque – OST	RCA
16	Nat King Cole	The Unforgettable	Virgin
17	Frank Sinatra	A Man And His Music	UMR
18	Nat King Cole	The Absolutely Essential Collection	Big3
19	Lady Blackbird	Black Acid Soul	BMG
20	Gregory Porter	Still Rising: The Collection	Decca

© Official Charts Company. All Rights Reserved.

Official Charts Company

SPECIALIST ALBUMS TOP 20s

OFFICIAL COUNTRY ARTIST TOP 20 ALBUMS

PHOTO: Beth Garrabrant

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Taylor Swift	Fearless (Taylor's Version)	EMI
2	Luke Combs	Gettin' Old	Sony Music CG
3	Morgan Wallen	One Thing At A Time	EMI
4	Luke Combs	This One's For You	Sony Music CG
5	Taylor Swift	Taylor Swift	Mercury
6	Luke Combs	What You See Is What You Get	Sony Music CG
7	Shania Twain	Come On Over	Mercury
8	Luke Combs	Growin' Up	Sony Music CG
9	Morgan Wallen	Dangerous: The Double Album	EMI
10	Far From Saints	Far From Saints	Ignition
11	Zach Bryan	American Heartbreak	Warner
12	Taylor Swift	Fearless	Mercury
13	Chris Stapleton	Traveller	Mercury Nashville
14	Glen Campbell	Adiós	UMR
15	Glen Campbell	Gentle On My Mind	UMR/Virgin
16	Bailey Zimmerman	Religiously The Album	Parlophone
17	Kelsea Ballerini	Rolling Up The Welcome Mat	Black River Ent.
18	Jordan Davis	Bluebird Days	Snakefarm
19	Chris Stapleton	Starting Over	Decca
20	The Chicks	Wide Open Spaces	Epic

OFFICIAL DANCE TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Joel Corry	Another Friday Night	Atlantic
2	Tiësto	Drive	Atlantic
3	David Guetta	One Love	Parlophone
4	Calvin Harris	18 Months	Columbia
5	Sigala	Every Cloud – Silver Linings	Ministry Of Sound
6	Fred Again..	USB	Atlantic
7	Robin Schulz	Prayer	Atlantic
8	David Guetta	Nothing But The Beat	Parlophone
9	David Guetta	Nothing But The Beat 2.0	Parlophone
10	The Prodigy	Their Law: The Singles 1990-2005	XL
11	Jax Jones	Snacks	Polydor
12	Calvin Harris	Motion	Columbia
13	Disclosure	Settle	Island/UMR
14	Fred Again..	Actual Life 3 (January 1 – September 9 2022)	Atlantic
15	Sigala	Brighter Days	Ministry Of Sound
16	Fred Again..	Actual Life (April 14 – December 17 2020)	Atlantic
17	Drake	Honestly, Nevermind	OVO/Republic
18	Jonas Blue	Blue	Positiva
19	Black Eyed Peas	The Beginning	Interscope
20	Major Lazer	Essentials	Because

OFFICIAL FOLK TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Gaz Brookfield	Morning Walking Club	Land Pirate
2	Lankum	False Lankum	Rough Trade
3	Various	The Endless Coloured Ways: The Songs Of...	Chrysalis
4	Skerryvore	Tempus	Cooking Vinyl
5	This Is The Kit	Careful Of Your Keepers	Rough Trade
6	The Mary Wallopers	The Mary Wallopers	BC
7	The Lilac Time	Dance Till All The Stars Come Down	Poetica
8	Seth Lakeman	The Somerset Sessions	Honour Oak
9	Marcus Mumford	(Self-Titled)	Island
10	Billie Marten	Drop Cherries	Fiction
11	Shirley Collins	Archangel Hill	Domino
12	Lisa O'Neill	All Of This Is Chance	Rough Trade
13	The Levellers Collective	Together All The Way	On The Fiddle
14	Elephant Sessions	For The Night	Elephant Sessions
15	Kate Rusby	30: Happy Returns	Pure
16	Passenger	Birds That Flew And Ships That Sailed	Black Crow
17	The Magpie Arc	Glamour In The Grey	Collective Perspective
18	The Unthanks	Sorrows Away	RabbleRouser
19	Angeline Morrison	The Sorrow Songs: Folk Songs Of Black...	Topic
20	The Young'uns	Tiny Notes	Hudson

OFFICIAL ROCK & METAL TOP 20 ALBUMS

TM	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	Skindred	Smile	Earache
2	Foo Fighters	The Essential	Sony Music CG
3	Green Day	Greatest Hits: God's Favorite Band	Reprise
4	Guns N' Roses	Greatest Hits	Geffen
5	Nirvana	Nirvana	Geffen
6	Nirvana	Nevermind	Geffen/UMR
7	Blink 182	Greatest Hits	Geffen
8	AC/DC	Iron Man 2 – OST	Columbia
9	Linkin Park	Hybrid Theory	Warner
10	Nickelback	The Best Of: Volume 1	Rhino
11	Guns N' Roses	Appetite For Destruction	Polydor/UMR
12	Metallica	Metallica	Vertigo
13	Green Day	American Idiot	Reprise
14	Slipknot	Antennas To Hell	Roadrunner
15	Sleep Token	Take Me Back To Eden	Spinefarm
16	Led Zeppelin	Mothership	Rhino
17	Linkin Park	Hybrid Theory/Reanimation	Warner
18	Limp Bizkit	Greatest Hitz	Geffen
19	System Of A Down	System Of A Down	American
20	Linkin Park	Meteora	Warner

© Official Charts Company. All Rights Reserved.

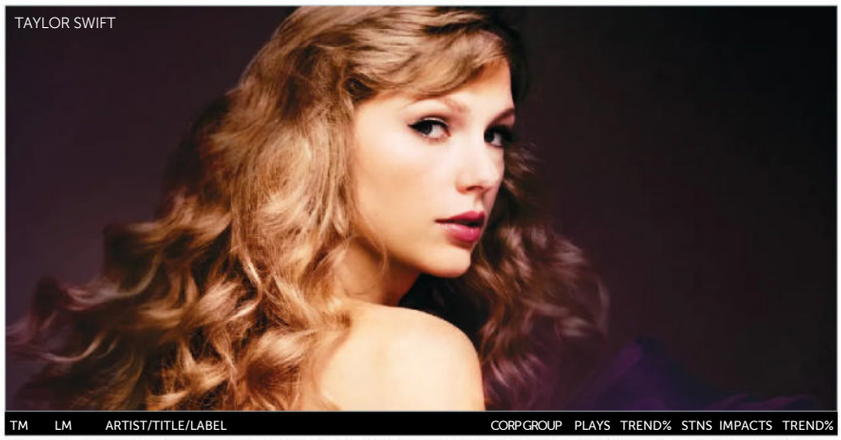
UK AIRPLAY

CHARTS KEY
HIGHEST NEW ENTRY
HIGHEST CLIMBER
PLAY/AUDIENCE INCREASE
TREND INCREASE +50%

RADIO MONITOR we're always listening

Music Week's UK and EU Radio Airplay chart based on RadioMonitor data ©.

UK RADIO AIRPLAY TOP 50



TM	LM	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL	CORP GROUP	PLAYS	TREND%	STNS	IMPACTS	TREND%
1	14	Taylor Swift Cruel Summer EMI	UMG	22,760	103%	229	237.2	109%
2	10	Peggy Gou (It Goes Like) Nanana XL	IND.	17,691	69%	245	191.64	37%
3	NEW	Calvin Harris & Sam Smith Desire Columbia	SME	15,992	1126%	216	191.55	852%
4	1	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From Barbie The Album) Warner	WMG	24,166	9%	250	179.53	-4%
5	5	Nathan Dawe, Joel Corry & Ella Henderson 0800 Heaven Atlantic	WMG	18,800	23%	218	171.39	12%
6	4	Olivia Rodrigo Vampire Geffen/Polydor	UMG	16,528	90%	214	152.44	-3%
7	2	Calvin Harris & Ellie Goulding Miracle Columbia	SME	19,305	-19%	205	141.88	-19%
8	9	Lewis Capaldi Forget Me EMI	UMG	15,822	-2%	230	132.04	-7%
9	12	Jax Jones & Calum Scott Whistle Polydor	UMG	16,655	-11%	200	120.47	-5%
10	21	Cian Ducrot Heaven Polydor	UMG	10,479	72%	155	112.2	24%
11	NEW	Becky Hill & Chase & Status Disconnect Polydor	UMG	6,586	278%	193	106.41	307%
12	8	Anne-Marie & Shania Twain Unhealthy Atlantic/Asylum/EMI	WMG	17,254	-14%	227	104.6	-27%
13	29	Rema & Selena Gomez Calm Down Jonzing Worldwide/Mavin	IND.	12,401	23%	139	96.33	22%
14	11	Tom Grennan How Does It Feel Insanity	SME	14,176	-17%	225	93.62	-32%
15	13	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero EMI	UMG	9,769	-25%	227	92.91	-18%
16	15	Dermot Kennedy Don't Forget Me Island	UMG	11,500	48%	150	90.7	-17%
17	NEW	Stormzy & Raye The Weekend 0207/Merky	UMG	4,124	286%	160	86.03	191%
18	25	Lewis Capaldi Pointless EMI	UMG	8,224	-7%	212	84.34	0%
19	7	Ed Sheeran Eyes Closed Atlantic	WMG	14,244	-27%	230	84.1	-42%
20	NEW	Jung Kook Ft Latto Seven BigHit Ent./RCA	UMG	5,352	329%	165	83.62	175%
21	NEW	Blur Barbaric Parlophone	WMG	1,754	485%	85	82.88	318%
22	24	Switch Disco & Ella Henderson React Relentless	SME	12,358	-13%	205	82.51	-2%
23	33	Becky Hill & David Guetta Remember Polydor	UMG	7,823	2%	202	80.6	8%
24	28	Joel Corry & Becky Hill History Atlantic	WMG	7,716	-4%	180	78.82	-3%
25	20	D.Guetta/Anne-Marie/C.Leray Baby Don't Hurt Me Parlophone	W/W	11,365	-15%	201	76.34	-16%
26	NEW	Troye Sivan Rush Polydor	UMG	6,246	191%	142	75.88	221%
27	26	Jonas Brothers Waffle House Republic/Polydor	UMG	12,649	-19%	193	74.06	-11%
28	NEW	James Blunt Beside You Atlantic	WMG	2,326	-	91	73.54	-
29	42	DOD So Much In Love Armada	IND.	3,896	23%	108	69.32	21%
30	22	Jorja Smith Little Things FAMM	IND.	5,952	25%	136	67.58	-23%
31	18	Jazzy Giving Me Chaos	UMG	10,606	-13%	197	67.32	-28%
32	27	Hannah Laing & RoRo Good Love WUGD	UMG	5,654	6%	154	66.66	-20%
33	34	Lewis Capaldi Wish You The Best Vertigo	UMG	9,296	-18%	204	65.44	-9%
34	NEW	Busted & Jonas Brothers Year 3000 2.0 Juno/Absolute	IND.	1,950	2608%	69	64.84	2287%
35	NEW	Beyond Chicago, Majestic & Alex Mills Million Dollar Bill D4 D4nce	WMG	7,876	30%	169	63.12	35%
36	NEW	Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds Open The Door... Sour Mash	IND.	1,136	176%	74	62.85	236%
37	35	Dave & Central Cee Sprinter Live Yours/Neighbourhood	IND.	1,930	-12%	75	61.66	-10%
38	NEW	Issey Cross Bittersweet Goodbye Atlantic	WMG	3,632	125%	157	61.41	140%
39	NEW	Gunna Fukumean 300 Ent.	WMG	1,026	62%	52	61.26	131%
40	23	Miley Cyrus Flowers RCA	SME	9,338	-31%	249	60.42	-29%
41	41	Harry Styles As It Was Columbia	SME	7,113	-10%	246	60.2	3%
42	3	Kylie Minogue Padam Padam BMG	IND.	12,614	-43%	257	60.14	-65%
43	NEW	Doja Cat Paint The Town Red Ministry Of Sound	SME	2,881	-	153	58.34	-
44	31	Miley Cyrus Jaded RCA	SME	7,766	48%	141	57.62	-25%
45	40	Jake Shears Last Man Dancing Mute	IND.	935	43%	50	56.19	-8%
46	19	J Hus Ft Drake Who Told You Black Butter/OVO/Republic	S/U	4,190	-10%	124	56.17	-39%
47	NEW	Texas Keep On Talking PIAS	IND.	2,067	1623%	76	55.23	1264%
48	32	The Weeknd, Playboi Carti... Popular Interscope/Republic/XO	UMG	3,491	-51%	141	54.43	-28%
49	NEW	Pink Runaway RCA	SME	7,593	-13%	110	53.21	37%
50	NEW	Zayn Love Like This Republic	UMG	5,539	251%	132	53.14	182%

UK TV AIRPLAY TOP 50

TM	LM	ARTIST/TITLE/LABEL	CORP GROUP	PLAYS	TREND%	STNS
1	13	Peggy Gou (It Goes Like) Nanana / XL	IND.	920	46%	6
2	12	Jorja Smith Little Things / FAMM	IND.	827	27%	6
3	26	N.Minaj/Ice Spice... Barbie... / Atlantic/Capitol/Republic	WMG	814	79%	8
4	1	Jazzy Giving Me / Chaos	UMG	785	-22%	6
5	17	Olivia Rodrigo Vampire / Geffen/Polydor	UMG	740	34%	6
6	4	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From Barbie...) / Warner	WMG	723	-9%	6
7	NEW	Stormzy & Raye The Weekend / 0207/Merky	UMG	711	736%	6
8	6	Dave & Central Cee Sprinter / Live Yours/Neighbourhood	IND.	695	-9%	6
9	NEW	Becky Hill & Chase & Status Disconnect / Polydor	UMG	688	691%	6
10	14	N.Dawe/J.Corry/E. Henderson 0800 Heaven / Atlantic	WMG	675	15%	5
11	15	Rudimental/C.Plank/Vibe... Dancing... / Room Two	SME	627	8%	6
12	11	The Weeknd/Playboi... Popular / Interscope/Republic/XO	UMG	608	-10%	6
13	NEW	Troye Sivan Rush / Polydor	UMG	596	548%	5
14	7	Anne-Marie/Shania Twain Unhealthy / Atlantic/Asylum/EMI	WMG	592	-18%	7
15	8	Calvin Harris & Ellie Goulding Miracle / Columbia	SME	575	-19%	6
16	45	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? / Interscope/Polydor	UMG	574	160%	5
17	20	Hannah Laing & RoRo Good Love / WUGD	UMG	570	12%	6
18	19	DOD So Much In Love / Armada	IND.	560	8%	6
19	NEW	Zayn Love Like This / Republic	UMG	550	817%	5
20	2	Kylie Minogue Padam Padam / BMG	IND.	515	-39%	8
21	NEW	Jung Kook Ft Latto Seven / BigHit Ent./RCA	UMG	506	325%	5
22	5	Leigh-Anne Don't Say Love / Warner	WMG	494	-36%	6
23	10	Tom Grennan How Does It Feel / Insanity	SME	438	-36%	5
24	NEW	Jax Jones & Fireboy DML Me And My Guitar / Polydor	UMG	426	127%	5
25	NEW	Beyond Chicago/Majestic/A.Mills Million... / D4 D4nce	WMG	420	1255%	6
26	NEW	Calvin Harris & Sam Smith Desire / Columbia	SME	419	-	6
27	NEW	Doja Cat Paint The Town Red / Ministry Of Sound	SME	404	-	6
28	NEW	Issey Cross Bittersweet Goodbye / Atlantic	WMG	389	548%	6
29	25	Post Malone Chemical / Republic	UMG	387	-16%	6
30	NEW	T.Scott/Bad Bunny/The Weeknd K-Pop / RCA/Republic/XO	SME	353	1505%	6
31	NEW	D-Block Europe & Clavish Pakistan / D-Block Europe	UMG	327	285%	6
32	3	Becky Hill & Lewis Thompson Side Effects / Polydor	UMG	314	-62%	5
33	9	D.Guetta/Anne-Marie/C.Leray Baby Don't... / Parlophone	W/W	288	-59%	6
34	NEW	Miley Cyrus Jaded / RCA	SME	287	71%	4
35	21	Switch Disco & Ella Henderson React / Relentless	SME	277	-45%	4
36	16	Jonas Brothers Waffle House / Republic/Polydor	UMG	269	-54%	4
37	24	Burna Boy Sittin' On Top Of The World / Atlantic	WMG	266	-44%	5
38	29	Lil Durk Ft J Cole All My Life / Ministry Of Sound	SME	263	-21%	5
39	34	Rema/S.Gomez Calm Down / Jonzing Worldwide/Mavin	IND.	254	-18%	6
40	NEW	J Hus Ft Naira Marley Militerian / Black Butter	SME	240	150%	5
41	27	Miley Cyrus Flowers / RCA	SME	237	-43%	7
42	46	Sigala/M.Muller/C.Baser Ft... Feels... / Ministry Of Sound	SME	232	5%	3
43	28	Lewis Capaldi Wish You The Best / Vertigo	UMG	229	-36%	4
44	NEW	Venbee & Rudimental Die Young / Columbia	SME	227	31%	4
45	41	Libianca People / 5K	SME	221	-13%	4
46	RE	Taylor Swift Anti-Hero / EMI	UMG	214	25%	7
47	NEW	Byron Messia Talibans / Geffen/Simple Stupid	UMG	204	558%	3
48	38	LF System Afraid To Feel / Warner	WMG	201	-25%	5
49	NEW	Olivia Rodrigo Bad Idea Right? / Geffen/Polydor	UMG	195	-	5
50	37	Ed Sheeran Eyes Closed / Atlantic	WMG	195	-32%	4

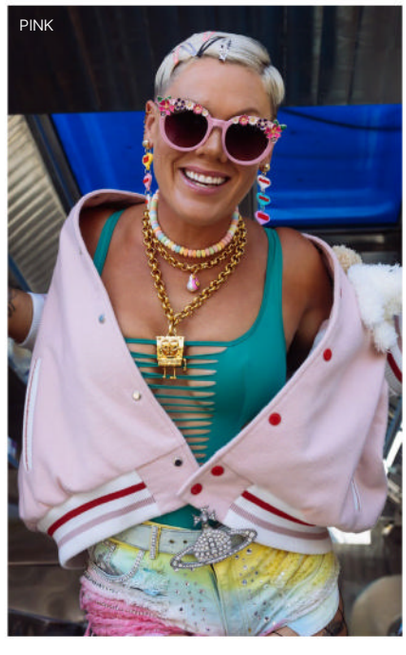
EU AIRPLAY

EU RADIO AIRPLAY TOP 50

TM	ARTIST/TITLE		COMPANY	CORP GROUP	PLAYS	STNS	IMPACTS
1	Dua Lipa	Dance The Night	Warner Records	WMG	128,520	1,741	2,709.04m
2	David Guetta feat. A..	Baby Don't Hurt Me	Warner Music	WMG	89,875	1,361	2,033.19m
3	Purple Disco Machine..	Substitution	Insanity Records	SME	77,715	1,071	1,957.68m
4	Pink	TRUSTFALL	Sony Music	SME	63,839	1,067	1,774.38m
5	OneRepublic	RUNAWAY	Universal Music	UMG	57,759	1,006	1,756.17m
6	Ed Sheeran	Eyes Closed	Atlantic	WMG	76,350	1,530	1,504.32m
7	Miley Cyrus	Flowers	Sony Music	SME	71,070	1,848	1,498.69m
8	Loreen	Tattoo	Universal Music	UMG	50,407	966	1,477.59m
9	Peggy Gou	(It Goes Like) Nanana	XL Recordings	Ind.	78,229	1,260	1,368.88m
10	Post Malone	Chemical	Universal Music	UMG	54,438	1,009	1,276.57m
11	Miley Cyrus	Jaded	Sony Music	SME	50,669	1,016	1,164.12m
12	Michael Schulte x R3HAB	Waterfall	Universal Music	UMG	32,205	427	1,044.34m
13	David Kushner	Daylight	Universal Music	UMG	26,912	516	976.26m
14	Nico Santos	Number 1	Virgin Records	UMG	26,421	317	951.03m
15	Tiësto	Lay Low	Warner Music	WMG	37,405	641	925.32m
16	R3HAB, INNA & Sash!	Rock My Body	Spinnin' Records	WMG	31,981	554	900.72m
17	Olivia Rodrigo	vampire	Universal Music	UMG	51,155	970	874.01m
18	ClockClock	Over	WEFOR	UMG	25,190	314	851.27m
19	Kolors, The	Italodisco	Warner Music Italy	WMG	28,681	624	816.26m
20	Ray Dalton	Do It Again	Sony Music	SME	29,550	429	804.11m
21	Leony	Holding On	Kontor Records	Ind.	23,600	331	794.77m
22	Lost Frequencies	The Feeling	disco:wax	SME	28,349	585	774.33m
23	twocolors x Safari Duo	Cynical	Universal Music	UMG	29,776	563	725.09m
24	Taylor Swift	Anti-Hero	Universal Music	UMG	33,564	1,208	713.08m
25	Imagine Dragons	Waves	Universal Music	UMG	19,964	365	711.84m
26	Calvin Harris feat. ..	Miracle	Sony Music	SME	56,750	1,002	704.95m
27	Måneskin	BABY SAID	Sony Music	SME	15,848	416	701.68m
28	Sophie And The Giant..	Paradise	Universal Music	UMG	38,753	804	701.01m
29	Linkin Park	Lost	Warner Records	WMG	16,215	347	691.66m
30	Jason Derulo feat. Dido	When Love Sucks	Asylum Records	WMG	21,163	436	685.28m
31	Metro Boomin feat. T..	Creepin'	Universal Music	UMG	28,199	703	679.79m
32	Taylor Swift	Cruel Summer	Universal Music	UMG	43,439	866	659.13m
33	Dermot Kennedy	Kiss Me	Universal Music	UMG	26,941	933	658.99m
34	David Guetta & Bebe ..	I'm Good (Blue)	Parlophone	WMG	35,774	1,298	652.85m
35	Harry Styles	As It Was	Sony Music	SME	32,504	1,634	650.74m
36	Kendji Girac feat. V..	Le Feu	Universal Music	UMG	13,618	152	641.65m
37	Rea Garvey	Free Like The Ocean	Universal Music	UMG	15,373	285	629.89m
38	Slimane feat. Claudi..	Chez Toi	Universal Music	UMG	12,616	155	619.29m
39	Lil Nas X	STAR WALKIN (League ..	Sony Music	SME	20,173	730	614.70m
40	Tom Gregory	Never Look Back	Sony Music	SME	20,890	370	611.68m
41	Jax Jones & Calum Scott	Whistle	Universal Music	UMG	44,229	881	602.58m
42	Calvin Harris & Sam ..	Desire	Columbia	SME	42,499	992	594.91m
43	Rosa Linn	SNAP	Columbia	SME	23,123	1,053	592.43m
44	Lena	What I Want	Polydor	UMG	15,520	234	589.73m
45	Jain	Makeba	Columbia	SME	34,017	914	585.29m
46	Lewis Capaldi	Forget Me	Universal Music	UMG	37,049	1,141	583.44m
47	ROSALÍA & Rauw Aleja..	BESO	Sony Music	SME	11,374	262	579.13m
48	Loi	NEWS	Warner Music	WMG	18,922	315	573.39m
49	KAMRAD	Feel Alive	Epic	SME	15,304	450	572.59m
50	Zoe Wees	Don't Give Up	Universal Music	UMG	17,938	345	556.72m

DUA LIPA

DAVID GUETTA


PINK

PEGGY GOU

ED SHEERAN

MILEY CYRUS

STREAMING

Spotify

GLOBAL

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Jung Kook Seven (Feat. Latto) (Explicit...)
2	Myke Towers Lala
3	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
4	Taylor Swift Cruel Summer
5	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From Barbie...)
6	Olivia Rodrigo Vampire
7	Quevedo Columbia
8	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice Barbie World (With Aqua) (From...)
9	Gunna Fukumean
10	Dave & Central Cee Sprinter
11	NewJeans Super Shy
12	Travis Scott Meltdown (Feat. Drake)
13	Bad Bunny Whre She Goes
14	David Kushner Daylight
15	Yng Lvcas La Bebe – Remix
16	Travis Scott Fe!n (Feat. Playboi Carti)
17	Harry Styles As It Was
18	Miley Cyrus Flowers
19	Doja Cat Paint The Town Red
20	SZA Kill Bill

EUROPE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From Barbie...)
2	Dave & Central Cee Sprinter
3	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
4	Peggy Gou (It Goes Like) Nanana – Edit
5	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice Barbie World (With Aqua)...
6	David Kushner Daylight
7	Quevedo Columbia
8	Myke Towers Lala
9	Olivia Rodrigo Vampire
10	Miley Cyrus Flowers
11	Gunna Fukumean
12	David Guetta Baby Don't Hurt Me
13	Taylor Swift Cruel Summer
14	Travis Scott Fe!n (feat. Playboi Carti)
15	The Weeknd Popular (With Playboi Carti...)
16	Loreen Tattoo
17	Travis Scott K-Pop
18	Travis Scott Meltdown (Feat. Drake)
19	Rosalía Beso
20	Doja Cat Paint The Town Red

UNITED KINGDOM

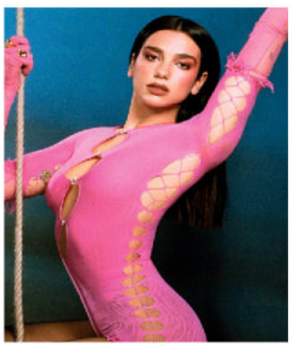
TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Central Cee & Dave Sprinter
2	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
3	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From...)
4	Olivia Rodrigo Vampire
5	Taylor Swift Cruel Summer
6	Peggy Gou (It Goes Like) Nanana – Edit
7	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice Barbie World (with Aqua)...
8	Gunna Fukumean
9	Charli XCX Speed Drive (From Barbie...)
10	Doja Cat Paint The Town Red
11	Becky Hill Disconnect
12	The Weeknd Popular (With Playboi Carti...)
13	Jazzy Giving Me
14	Hannah Laing Good Love
15	J Hus Who Told You (Feat. Drake)
16	Ryan Gosling I'm Just Ken (From Barbie The...)
17	David Kushner Daylight
18	Calvin Harris Desire (With Sam Smith)
19	Calvin Harris Miracle (With Ellie Goulding)
20	Chase & Status Baddadan (feat. Irah, Flowdan...)

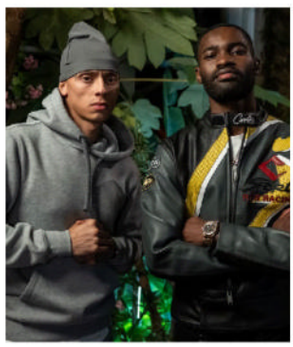
FRANCE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Soolking Casanova
2	Heuss L'enfoiré Saiyan
3	SDM Bolide Allemand
4	Tiakola Meuda
5	Freeze Corleone Shavkat
6	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From Barbie...)
7	Naps, Gazo, Ninho C'est Carré Le S
8	Loreen Tattoo
9	Jey Brownie, Flem KGB GTB
10	No Limit La Rue
11	Vacra Tiki Taka
12	Rosalía Beso
13	NazakeBlack 1,2,3 Soleil
14	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice Barbie World (With Aqua)...
15	Morad, Jul Se Grita
16	Ninho Eurostar (Feat. Central Cee)
17	PLK Nouvelles
18	Miley Cyrus Flowers
19	Ayra Starr Rush
20	David Kushner Daylight

GERMANY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Luca-Dante Spadafora Mädchen Auf Dem Pferd
2	Sira 9 Bis 9
3	Udo Lindenberg Komet
4	Ski Aggu Mietfrei
5	Niklas Dee Not Fair
6	Ski Aggu Friesenjung
7	Yung Yury Tabu
8	Ayliva Weißes Haus
9	Kontra K Summertime
10	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice Barbie World (With Aqua...)
11	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
12	Erobé Ewigkeit – Remix
13	Creeds Push Up – Main Edit
14	David Kushner Daylight
15	Gunna Fukumean
16	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From...)
17	Travis Scott Fe!n (feat. Playboi Carti)
18	Dave & Central Cee Sprinter
19	Bennett Vois Sur Ton Chemin – Techno
20	01099 Anders


DUA LIPA


CENTRAL CEE & DAVE

PEGGY GOU

TAYLOR SWIFT

BILLIE EILISH

NETHERLANDS

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Peggy Gou (It Goes Like) Nanana – Edit
2	Marco Schuitmaker Engelbewaarder
3	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
4	Kris Kross Amsterdam How You Samba
5	Dua Lipa Dance The Night (From Barbie...)
6	Dave & Central Cee Sprinter
7	Olivia Rodrigo Vampire
8	Loreen Tattoo
9	Marshmello Esta Vida
10	Calvin Harris Miracle (With Ellie Goulding)

NORWAY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	DJ MøMø Badebussen (Feat...)
2	Kudos Haien Kommer (Sharkdog)
3	Marstein Sommerhus
4	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
5	Dave & Central Cee Sprinter
6	Undergrunn Michelin Stjerner
7	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice Barbie World (With Aqua)...
8	Delara Josefin
9	Bausa Turné
10	23 Feeling Myself – Roc Boyz Remix

SPAIN

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Quevedo Columbia
2	Myke Towers Lala
3	Saiko Polaris – Remix
4	Rauw Alejandro Baby Hello
5	LIT Killah Los Del Espacio
6	Omar Montes Arena Y Sal
7	Jhayco Holanda
8	Sebastian Yatra Vagabundo
9	Marshmello El Merengue
10	Maluma Coco Loco

SWEDEN

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Bolaget Ikväll Igen
2	Dave Sprinter
3	Bolaget Kan Inte Gå
4	Thomas Stenström Andas In Andas Ut
5	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
6	Babblarna Babblarnas Vaggvisa
7	Hov1 Gråt
8	Einár Standard
9	Humlan Djojj Djurens Vaggvisa
10	Hooja Banan Melon Kiwi & Citron

UNITED STATES

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Gunna Fukumean
2	Taylor Swift Cruel Summer
3	Morgan Wallen Last Night
4	Travis Scott Meltdown (Feat. Drake)
5	Nicki Minaj, Ice Spice Barbie World (With Aqua)...
6	Olivia Rodrigo Vampire
7	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (From...)
8	Travis Scott I Know?
9	Doja Cat Paint The Town Red
10	Travis Scott Fe!n (Feat. Playboi Carti)

vevo

STREAMING - MUSIC VIDEO

WORLDWIDE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Aqua Barbie Girl (Official Music Video)
2	Karol G Mi Ex Tenía Razón (Official Video)
3	Karol G, Shakira TQG (Official Video)
4	Feid, Young Miko Classy 101 (Official Video)
5	Yuridia, Angela Aguilar Qué Agonía (Video Oficial)
6	Jay Wheeler, Anuel AA, Hades66 Pacto (Remix) (Official Video)
7	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down (Official Music Video)
8	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For Africa...)
9	Karol G S91 (Official Video)
10	The Weeknd Save Your Tears (Official Music Video)
11	Bad Gyal, Young Miko, Tokischa Chulo Pt.2 – (Official Video)
12	Shakira Acróstico (Official Video)
13	Miley Cyrus Flowers (Official Video)
14	Post Malone, Swae Lee Sunflower (Spider-Man: Into The Spider...)
15	Sinéad O'Connor Nothing Compares 2 U (Official Music...)
16	Mark Ronson Uptown Funk (Official Video) Ft. Bruno Mars
17	Brray, Jhayco, Ryan Castro Corazón Roto (Remix) (Official Video)
18	CantaJuego Soy Una Taza (Version Mexico)
19	CantaJuego El Baile del Gorila
20	Karol G Amargura (Visualizer)

UNITED KINGDOM

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Jazzy Giving Me (Official Visualiser)
2	Sinéad O'Connor Nothing Compares 2 U (Official Music...)
3	Aqua Barbie Girl (Official Music Video)
4	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down (Official Music Video)
5	Miley Cyrus Flowers (Official Video)
6	Switch Disco React (Ft. Ella Henderson) (Lyric Video)
7	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (Official Music Video)
8	Libianca People (Official Video)
9	Ice Spice Deli
10	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For Africa) (The...)
11	Dwayne Johnson You're Welcome (From Moana/Official...)
12	French Montana Unforgettable Ft. Swae Lee
13	Katy Perry Roar
14	J Hus Who Told You (Official Audio) Ft. Drake
15	Lewis Capaldi Someone You Loved
16	David Kushner Daylight (Official Music Video)
17	Post Malone, Swae Lee Sunflower (Spider-Man: Into The Spider...)
18	Lady Gaga, Bradley Cooper Shallow (From A Star Is Born) (Official...)
19	Calvin Harris, Ellie Goulding Miracle (Official Video)
20	Ayra Starr Rush (Official Music Video)

UNITED STATES

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Toosii Favorite Song (Official Video)
2	Ice Spice Deli
3	Morgan Wallen Last Night (One Record At A Time Sessions)
4	Offset & Cardi B Jealousy (Official Music Video)
5	SZA Snooze (Audio)
6	Karol G Mi Ex Tenía Razón (Official Video)
7	Ice Spice & Nicki Minaj Princess Diana (Official Music Video)
8	Glorilla, Cardi B Tomorrow 2 (Official Music Video)
9	Post Malone, Swae Lee Sunflower (Spider-Man: Into The Spider...)
10	Aqua Barbie Girl (Official Music Video)
11	Karol G, Shakira TQG (Official Video)
12	Tyler Childers In Your Love (Official Video)
13	Yuridia, Angela Aguilar Qué Agonía (Video Oficial)
14	Lil Baby California Breeze (Official Video)
15	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down (Official Music Video)
16	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For? (Official Music...)
17	Karol G S91 (Official Video)
18	Doja Cat Paint The Town Red (Official Video)
19	Chris Stapleton Tennessee Whiskey (Official Audio)
20	Dwayne Johnson You're Welcome (From Moana/Official...)

NEW ARTISTS – UK

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Ice Spice Deli
2	Jazzy Feel It (Official Visualiser)
3	Prinz, Gabriela Bee High & Lows (Official Video)
4	Halle Angel (Official Video)
5	Talia Mar Forget About Your Ex (Official Video)
6	Iniko Jericho (Official Video)
7	Qing Madi, BNXN Ole (Official Video)
8	Valiant Mad Out (Official Video)
9	RajahWild Wild Out (Official Music Video)
10	Etta Marcus Theatre (Official Visualiser)
11	Halle Part Of Your World (From "The Little...)
12	Tays Your Tings My Ting ft. Cole LC
13	Sugarhill Ddot, Luh Tyler 3am In The Yams (Official Music Video)
14	Jaz Karis Back 2 U (Official Music Video)
15	Jazzy Giving Me (Official Video)
16	Venbee, Rudimental Die Young (Official Video)
17	Ewan McVicar Groove Thang (Visualiser)
18	Tyla Water (Live) | Vevo DSCVR
19	Joshua Bassett Can I Have This Dance (HSMTMTS | Disney+)
20	Stephen Sanchez Be More (Lyric Video)

KAROL G

JAZZY

TOOSII

ICE SPICE

FRANCE

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Ayra Starr Rush (Official Music Video)
2	Aqua Barbie Girl (Official Music...)
3	Sinéad O'Connor Nothing Compares 2 U...
4	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For...)
5	Louane Secret
6	Louise Attaque J't'emmène Au Vent (Clip...)
7	Indila Dernière Danse (Clip Officiel)
8	Miley Cyrus Flowers (Official Video)
9	Maître Gims Sapés Comme Jamais (Clip..)
10	Manau La Tribu De Dana (Clip...)

GERMANY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Sinéad O'Connor Nothing Compares 2 U...
2	Aqua Barbie Girl (Official Music...)
3	Shakira Waka Waka (This Time For...)
4	Miley Cyrus Flowers (Official Video)
5	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down (Official Music...)
6	David Kushner Daylight (Official Music Video)
7	Purple Disco Machine, Kungs Substitution (Official Music...)
8	Roland Kaiser, Maite Kelly Warum Hast Du Nicht Nein...
9	50 Cent In Da Club (Official Music...)
10	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For?

AUSTRALIA

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Rema, Selena Gomez Calm Down (Official Music...)
2	Aqua Barbie Girl (Official Music...)
3	Miley Cyrus Flowers (Official Video)
4	Sinead O'Connor Nothing Compares 2 U...
5	Morgan Wallen Last Night (One Record At...)
6	Post Malone, Swae Lee Sunflower (Spider-Man: Into...)
7	Katy Perry Roar
8	Mark Ronson Uptown Funk Ft. Bruno Mars
9	Dwayne Johnson You're Welcome (From Moana...)
10	Billie Eilish What Was I Made For?

SPAIN

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Sebastián Yatra, Manuel Turizo... Vagabundo (Official Video)
2	Marshmello, Manuel Turizo El Merengue (Official Video)
3	Vicco Nochentera (Video Oficial)
4	Jay Wheeler, Anuel AA, Hades66 Pacto (Remix) (Official...) Ft...
5	Moncho Chavea/Omar Montes... La Aprendiz (Remix)
6	Chanel, Abraham Mateo Clavaito (Official Video)
7	Karol G, Shakira TQG (Official Video)
8	Maluma Coco Loco (Official Video)
9	Lola Indigo, Quevedo El Tonto (Official Video)
10	Omar Montes, Saiko, Tunvao Arena Y Sal (Official Video)

ITALY

TM	ARTIST/TITLE
1	Alfa Bellissimissima
2	Drillionaire Bon Ton Ft Lazza, Blanco...
3	Tony Effe, Emma Taxi Sulla Luna (Prod...)
4	Geolier Come Vuoi (Official Video)
5	Marco Mengoni Due Vite (Official Video...)
6	Boomdabash, Paola & Chiara Lambada
7	Blanco, Mina Un Briciolo Di Allegria
8	Lazza Cenere
9	Rocco Hunt, Elettra... Caramello (Official Video)
10	Rocco Hunt Non Litighiamo Più (Official...)

TikTok Trending

INSIDE THE MOST VIRAL TRACKS OF THE MONTH

UNITED KINGDOM

Charli XCX

Speed Drive

Video Creations: 142,500

Barbie has taken over TikTok this summer with over 81 billion views on #Barbie and a soundtrack that keeps on giving. Barbie: The Album is an eclectic mix of genre-spanning tracks, each offering something different from the song before it, and Charli XCX's Speed Drive is a pulse-raiser that undoubtedly brings the energy.

Clocking in at less than two minutes, this aptly named track has been getting the TikTok community hyped and ready to party. Speed Drive also weaves in some nostalgia, interpolating Toni Basil's Mickey, and introducing a new generation to the classic hit.

Lucy Benbow, label partnerships manager at TikTok, pays tribute to how TikTok users have embraced the Barbie trend and with it Charli XCX's modern yet nostalgic hit.

"In a summer dominated by the Barbie sensation, Speed Drive has caught the TikTok community's attention with its infectious energy and creative blend of a contemporary sound with a subtle hint of the past," she says. "Paying homage to Toni Basil's '80s track Mickey on the chorus, creators are loving this speedy and spirited fresh twist on an older hit. With billions of views on #Barbie content, creators quickly started to use Charli XCX's track to show off their Barbiecore glam tutorials, fit checks and outfit transitions."

PHOTOS: Terrence O'Connor

"Speed Drive has caught the TikTok community's attention with its infectious energy"
Lucy Benbow, TikTok

Cassö & Raye & D-Block Europe

Prada

Video Creations: 130,200

Emerging artist Cassö is making a case for having one of the strongest debuts of 2023 with his trance-inspired single Prada. Having uploaded the remix to TikTok in May, the community loved it, helping Prada take on a life of its own and resulting in an official release in August. The track samples Raye and D-Block Europe's Ferrari Horses hit, and the song's trance elements has creators feeling like they've been transported to clubs in Paris, Berlin and Prague. The future looks bright for this twenty-year-old producer.

Celina Sharma & Girls Like You

Killer

Video Creations: 150,900

The TikTok community are always on the lookout for the latest fusions of sounds, and this collaboration between songstress Celina Sharma and UK girl group Girls Like You has provided the perfect summer soundtrack. Combining a catchy hook with an electronic beat, Killer has reached No.1 on TikTok's UK Hot 50 chart, an incredible feat made even more special by the fact it came during South Asian Heritage Month. Both acts are champions of South Asian Music and Killer is a testament to the talent coming out of the community.

GLOBAL

NewJeans

Super Shy

Video Creations: 898,000

Despite debuting just over a year ago, Korean girl group NewJeans are cementing themselves as a marquee act in the K-pop world. With prior singles such as Ditto going viral, fans have quickly become acclimated with these new young stars. This summer, NewJeans have raised the bar again with Super Shy. The sound has taken TikTok by storm and has been propelled by the dance community, who have released tutorials emulating choreography from the official video, as well as their own dance moves.

Billie Eilish

What Was I Made For?

Video Creations: 1,300,000

Another standout from Barbie: The Album, What Was I Made For? switches lanes from songs like Speed Drive or Barbie World, with an introspective tune that has struck an emotional chord with TikTok creators. Mirroring themes explored in the film, fans are using the sound to contemplate topics of self-worth and self-perception, as well as reflecting on their relationships. The sound has been featured in videos reminiscing about childhood, with creators appreciating the nostalgia of playing with toys and simpler times.

Music Week

WOMEN IN MUSIC AWARDS 2023

in association with UK MUSIC AIM

Recognising the achievements of great careers and brilliant executives

Follow us on X @MusicWeek to see the 2023 Winners revealed live during our ceremony on November 10!

Find out more info at mw-womeninmusic.com

#MWWIM

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

BLACKSTAR | DOWNTOWN | PRS Foundation | PRS for MUSIC

SOUNDCLOUD | MUSIIO | Spotify | TikTok | vevo | YouTube

THE Music Week ARCHIVE

25 years ago...

NEWS: Following 12 years with BMG, CASTLE has opted to switch its distribution to Pinnacle
Castle quits BMG 4

A&R: Were there any future stars at the IN THE CITY Unsigned event? *Music Week* was there to find out
Talent 8

COUNTRY: As the charts finally fall to country music, DOLLY PARTON is set for her own big comeback
Talent extra 26

PRO-AUDIO & STUDIOS STARTS p28

FOR EVERYONE IN THE BUSINESS OF MUSIC 26 SEPTEMBER 1998 £3.50

MW music week

Dickins exit marks end of era

by Ajax Scott

The UK's longest serving major record company chairman, Warner Music's Rob Dickins, is to leave the company on December 31 after the company's US bosses declined to renew his contract.

Dickins – the current BPI chairman – has finally fallen victim to long-standing animosities with Warner's US management, despite the fact that 1998 has been one of the most successful of his 15 years in the job. On five different weeks Warner has held all top three positions in the UK albums chart and for one it held the top four. It had the second largest corporate market share for the first six months of 1998.

Dickins' departure is the culmination of a painful relationship with his US bosses stretching back to the moment in October 1994 when he was summoned to New York to be offered the post of running Warner Bros in the US, only for the job to be snatched away at the 11th hour.

Dickins has subsequently had a poor relationship with Warner Music's joint worldwide chief Bob Daly. This is understood to have been made worse by events such as the negotiations that terminated Warner's deal with ZTT.

"Since 1994 I have had a roller coaster ride with the corporate side of the company. In the last year of so it has got pretty intense. It was either me or the corporation. Go figure who won," says Dickins. Adding that it ultimately boiled down to a "lack of chemistry", he says, "It was a personal thing. There's nothing that they can find wrong in anything else."

A senior Warner US source suggests that Daly thought it was "time for a change". A spokesman for Daly declined to comment.

Noting that he is leaving with "mixed emotions – complete sadness with the people and artists I have worked with", Dickins says he is now looking forward to setting up his own entertainment company. "I'm not going to do a John Preston. I'm definitely going to be back in the record business as soon as possible," he says.

One option being explored is the launch of a label deal with Warner. "I have positive thoughts about the past and future with this company," says Dickins. "It's now so amicable that if they haven't found a replacement [when I leave] I will act as a consultant." Among the key projects underway is the ongoing development of a joint distribution operation with Sony Music.

He adds that so far he has not considered any other offers. "I'm just going to listen to what ideas people have for the next couple of months," he says.

Although Dickins has previously wanted to work in the US, it seems likely he will remain in the UK. It has been suggested he could run DreamWorks' international operations, a prospect he now dismisses. "I really don't want to run a company for someone else, but who I work with is completely open. Warner are first on the block."

Earlier this summer Dickins was shortlisted for the part time post of chairman of the Victoria & Albert Museum, but he is now out of the running.

Dickins, who will continue as BPI chairman, confirmed his departure last Friday. The move had been decided eight days earlier at a meeting in Los Angeles with Bob Daly, although the paperwork was only concluded late last week.

Dickins has had an illustrious career in the 27 years he has been involved with Warner-related companies. As a publisher he signed acts such as the Sex Pistols, Vangelis, Madness and Echo & The Bunnymen, while as a record executive he has worked with artists as diverse as Enya, Howard Jones, Cher, Rod Stewart and, most recently, The Corrs. This year is set to be one of Warner Music UK's best ever, thanks to hits from The Corrs, Rod Stewart, Madonna, Catatonia, Cleopatra and Mike Oldfield.

Dickins' departure is likely to set in motion a long-awaited series of executive moves across the UK business. Whoever replaces him is likely to examine the whole structure of Warner's UK operation. East West has been without a managing director since Max Hole left to join Universal Music in February.

Universal managing director Nick Phillips has been tipped as a possible successor to Dickins. Philips was on holiday last week and unavailable for comment. Another rumoured contender is PolyGram Canada chairman John Reid, who previously ran London Records in the UK. The situation is further complicated by the prospect of Roger Ames, head of PolyGram's worldwide music operations, joining Warner Music International to work alongside and ultimately replace WMI chairman /ceo Ramon Lopez. He were to join Warner he would almost certainly have input into the appointment of the UK chairman.

THE DICKINS' YEARS

1971: Joins Kinney Music Publishing (later Warner Brothers Music, then Warner Chappell) as junior promotions executive
1973: Promoted to professional manager and then managing director a year later
1979: Takes post of international vice president
1983: Chairman of WEA Records (later Warner Music UK)
1994: Accepts chairmanship of Warner Bros Records US, but offer withdrawn by Warner Music Group chief Bob Morgado a day later
1995: Offered chairmanship of Elektra Records and a position within Warner Music Group by Morgado's successor Michael Fuchs, who is fired before Dickins can take up the post.

EC looks likely to approve Seagram's PolyGram buy

Universal's $10.4bn takeover of PolyGram looks set to take a giant leap towards completion today (Monday) with the expected approval of the deal by the European Commission.

European Commissioner for competition policy Karel van Miert is expected to give the green light to the deal following the expiry of the deadline today for extending his department's six-week inquiry. The acquisition has already been passed by US competition authorities.

With the final regulatory hurdle overcome, Seagram will start wooing the public shareholders who own the 25% of PolyGram not held by Philips.

Meanwhile, EMI and French media giant Canal Plus pulled out of the running for PolyGram Filmed Entertainment prior to the dead-line for bids last Friday. Following its withdrawal, EMI's share price rallied slightly, adding 1p to 399p at the end of last week.

Van Miert: green light

Mark & Lard to star in UK Play's launch

Radio One's Mark & Lard and The O Zone's Jamie Theakston are to front their own music shows on UK Play, the digital TV channel launching next month.

UK Play, a joint venture between BBC Worldwide and Flextech, will offer 70% music, 20% comedy and 10% a mixture of the two. Targeted at 16-25 year-olds, it will start broadcasting on BSkyB digital and cable digital from October 10, with digital cable and terrestrial digital services to follow.

Theakston will present Jam Mix, a 30-minute show broadcast on Monday and Wednesday at 10pm and Sunday at 10.15pm. Mark & Lard will also host a weekly show, Tenuous Links, broadcast Saturdays from 3pm-4pm.

TOP STORY

EXIT MUSIC

The business was rocked by the news of Rob Dickins' departure from Warner Music back in September 1998. The longest serving major record company chairman at the time, Dickins was to depart after 15 years in the role. We reported that the company's US bosses "declined to renew his contract" after Dickins "fell victim to long-standing animosities with Warner's US management". The news was all the more surprising given that it came during one of the most successful years of his tenure, during which Warner held the Top 5 positions in the UK albums chart on five different weeks. The major was the second biggest according to market share for the first half of the year. Our report detailed the collapse of Dickins' move to run Warner Bros US and the subsequent breakdown in relations with joint worldwide chief Bob Daly. "Since 1994 I have had a rollercoaster ride with the corporate side of the company," said Dickins. "In the last year or so it has got pretty intense. It was either me or the corporation, go figure who won." Even so, the split was amicable. Dickins would set up label venture Instant Karma in 1999 and received a CBE for services to the music industry in 2002.

FOR THE GRAM

Universal's $10.4 billion takeover of PolyGram was moving closer thanks to imminent approval by the European Commission. The deal was sealed by December, setting in motion a reorganisation of PolyGram's music and film properties. The company name continues as Polygram Entertainment, which Universal launched in 2017 as a film and TV unit.

PLAY OFF

Mark Radcliffe and Marc Riley, stars on BBC Radio 1 as Mark and Lard, along with The O Zone's Jamie Theakston, were to front new music TV shows on UK Play, due to air in October. Chris Moyles and Vic Reeves also joined before the station's closure in 2002.

Also inside... **Castle Communications** switched its distribution to **Pinnacle**... Team **Dolly Parton** were plotting the country star's comeback... **Cay**, **Elbow** and more shone at **In The City**... **Virgin Records** was reaping the benefits of **Gomez** winning the **Mercury Music Prize**... The **BPI**'s **David Martin** highlighted the importance of the conviction of music bootlegger Mark Jenkins... The **IFPI** warned against the "controversial" arrival of **Diamond**'s **Rio MP3 player**... **PJ Harvey** revealed plans to preview new album **Is This Desire?** on the internet... **Atlantic 252** hired **MTV** head of music **David Dunne** as its new programme director... **Mel B** and **Missy Elliott** topped the singles chart with **I Want You Back**, while the No.1 album was **Manic Street Preachers' This Is My Truth Tell Me Yours**...

5 years ago...

TOP STORY
SOLID GOLDBLUM

Music Week welcomed Hollywood royalty to our cover in September 2018, as Jeff Goldblum "rewrote the script" in pivoting from cinema to music for the release of his debut album. Presented by Goldblum and his Mildred Snitzer Orchestra, The Capitol Studios Sessions marked the culmination of a long love affair with jazz. But before discussing that, the smooth-talking star began by offering his thoughts on the "Jeff Goldblum statue" that had been unveiled in London.

"You know, it was a very heavy statue," he said. "It wasn't a balloon, it was wind resistant! Yes, yes, it can't float away or deflate, just like me."

From there, the iconic actor professed his love for the piano and, together with his team at Decca and Verve, looked ahead to the album.

"When I was a kid, my dad, who was a jazz fan, brought home Erroll Garner Plays Misty," Goldblum said. "Misty was one of his favourite songs and I learned to play it."

Fast-forward through a remarkable acting career taking in Jurassic Park, The Fly and more and Goldblum was finally ready to put his skills to the test as a music artist, much to the delight of Team Decca.

"This isn't just any Hollywood legend," said then-president Rebecca Allen. "This is *Jeff Goldblum*, he's Hollywood royalty. He's also a seriously talented pianist."

Tom Lewis, who now leads Decca alongside Laura Monks, added: "I'd like to pretend I can take it all in my stride, but I really can't. It's hilarious to think I'm Jeff's A&R."

"I'm just a baby at this point!" Goldblum reflected on his music journey so far. "I'll know more in a little bit, but so far, if Decca is representative, it couldn't be populated with nicer, more intelligent, gracious, sensitive, generous and creative people."

And Goldblum's music is still going strong on Decca – the star released his Plays Well With Others EP earlier this year!

Also inside... **Chris Evans**' move from **BBC Radio 2** to **Virgin Radio** was our lead news story... **Rich Robinson** landed a top sync role at **Warner Chappell**... **UK music exports** reached £408.4 million... **Annie Mac** was confirmed as the **Mercury Music Prize** host... **Stacey Tang** joined **RCA** as MD... **EMI** looked ahead to **Paul McCartney**'s first solo record in five years... **Calvin Harris** & **Sam Smith** topped the singles chart with **Promises** and **Eminem**'s **Kamikaze** was the No.1 album...

20 years ago...

This month's *Music Week* cover star **Kylie Minogue** was preparing for the release of her ninth album, which was confirmed at **Parlophone**'s autumn presentation to staff... Elsewhere, the majors lined up their **Q4** big guns, with records from **Britney Spears**, **Blazin' Squad**, **Dido**, **Westlife** and more all due... **Universal** acts scooped 19 **MOBO Awards** nods... **Virgin Megastores** launched a pay-as-you-go download service... **Where Is The Love?** by **Black Eyed Peas** ruled the singles chart, while the top album was **Permission To Land** by **The Darkness**...

30 years ago...

ASCAP lost its two leading executives as MD **Gloria Messinger** and general counsel **Bernard Korman** departed... **Sony Music** deflected an attempt to disclose its artist contracts in court as the **George Michael** case continued... **Malcolm McLaren**, former manager of the **Sex Pistols**, told In The City delegates that he paid a third party to clean the knife allegedly used by bassist **Sid Vicious** to kill **Nancy Spungen**... **Boom! Shake The Room** was No.1 for **Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince**, while the top album was **Nirvana**'s **In Utero**...

THE AFTERSHOW

The industry's biggest names have the last word on their life in music...

Alfie Boe

Ahead of releasing his new album **Open Arms** – a covers set that mixes rock classics with orchestral bombast – operatic superstar **Alfie Boe** looks back on a career that's seen him team up with everyone from **Michael Ball** to **Pearl Jam**'s **Eddie Vedder**...

INTERVIEW: NIALL DOHERTY

I had the idea for my new album Open Arms...
"Over 20 years ago! It was a project I'd wanted to do for a long time – to collaborate with an orchestra, have a contemporary band and do well-known classic rock songs that can show the versatility of that music and how associated it is with the classical world. The Aerosmith song I Don't Want To Miss A Thing is a really cool song to sing and Journey's Open Arms is another beautiful track, but the song that really hit me the most is Wicked Game by Chris Isaak. On the album, it's simply myself and five string players and my two backing singers. It's just so broken down, so emotional and emotive."

Writing my memoir Face The Music taught me...
"Not to put things off. I learned to not procrastinate and address things that need to be addressed. Sometimes with depression or mental illness, people put things off and ask themselves, 'How long can I stay in bed until I really have to get up?' I learned that I like self-motivation."

The best advice I've received is, 'When you're not working, rehearse'...
"When I trained as an opera singer, I had a lot of old school opera singers who'd been in the business for years tell me that whenever I'm not working, that's the time to master your craft to really improve yourself. A guy called Richard Van Allen and another fella called Paul Griffiths were amazing mentors for me. And weirdly, completely not associated with music in any form, but the old school comedian Frank Carson said exactly the same, that whenever you have time off, improve yourself, learn new things."

Playing the role of Jimmy for Pete Townshend's Classic Quadrophenia was incredible...
"To work with Pete Townshend and Billy Idol, they really inspired me as performers to break out into a genre I love but hadn't had the opportunity to perform. Phil Daniel as well, being on stage with the guy that played the original Jimmy. All really humble, cool, beautiful people. One of the best memories of the whole thing was when we toured the US and in Chicago, we were joined on stage by Eddie Vedder. To get to duet with Eddie was a dream come true because I was a massive Pearl Jam fan. It was crazy."

You have to remember where you're from...
"And who you are as a person and not let the glitz and glamour take you away. I'm just a guy from Fleetwood. It's important to keep your feet on the ground and I've always tried to maintain that – and when you look at some of the biggest artists, they're all like that. Another mate of mine, Ian McKellen, is from Wigan and he's never forgotten his roots, he always loves going back home. Robert Plant again, one of the biggest rock stars in the world, he knows that he's a Midlands boy. It's those people that inspire me and I admire, for who they are and what they've achieved."

Signing to BMG feels like things are coming full circle...
"I'm so grateful that BMG have taken on this project and brought me on board as one of their artists. They're a great label. In the early days, I made my first album with Sony BMG when they were together so it's nice to come full circle with BMG now. They have a wonderful team with some amazing ideas for this album and hopefully the future."

Michael Ball is a lot more superstitious than me...
"He's got a routine, certain things that he *has* to do before he goes on stage. There's no whistling allowed backstage, if anybody whistles, he'll shout at them and say, "Stop whistling!" And you have to go out of the room, spin three times, spit and swear and then knock on the door and ask to be let back in. It's just outrageous. He's got all these routines and he has to do the same thing every single day, like his shoes have to be in a certain place in his dressing room every night. I'm not like that, I'm completely different, so I think it annoys him when I do stuff that goes against the grain. The thing with me and Michael is that we just have fun, we get on really well."

When the crowd says Boe: *Alfie Boe's album Open Arms is released October 27 via BMG*

"Michael Ball is very superstitious, there's no whistling allowed backstage"
Alfie Boe

PHOTO: Steve Schofield

Musicians: we might be holding money for you

In 2022, we distributed a record £1.37m to musicians

In 2023, we have distributed £600,000 to date

Perhaps you are due a royalty payment for the use of your recordings in TV programmes, films or adverts?

Please contact us:
unpaid_musicians@theMU.org

Musicians' Union

@WeAreTheMU
theMU.org

130 years of the MU

BUSTED

GREATEST HITS 2.0

OUT FRIDAY 15 SEPTEMBER!

Year 3000 2.0 X Jonas Brothers

3AM 2.0 X James Arthur

MMMBop 2.0 X Hanson

What I Go To School For 2.0 X The Vamps

Thunderbirds Are Go 2.0 X McFly

Crashed The Wedding 2.0 X All Time Low

Loser Kid 2.0 X Simple Plan

Air Hostess 2.0 X You Me At Six

Everything I Knew 2.0 X Dashboard Confessional

Meet You There 2.0 X Neck Deep

Who's David 2.0 X Wheatus

She Wants To Be Me 2.0 X Bowling For Soup

Sleeping With The Light On 2.0 X Deaf Havana

You Said No 2.0 X Charlotte Sands

Good One exclusive new BUSTED track!

Original 2002 & 2003 albums on Island Records 5 x PLATINUM

PRESTIGE
ARTIST MANAGEMENT

GREATEST HITS TOUR 2 SEPTEMBER – 10 OCTOBER

27 ARENA DATES AND 200,000 TICKETS SOLD

20 YEARS OF BUSTED

9001

9000